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BOSTON COMMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

CITY OF BOSTON, MAYOR RAYMOND L. FLYNN
BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION



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WALKER • KLUESING DESIGN GROUP

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Lloyd Jameson
Public Documents Room
Boston Public Library
666 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02117

July 30, 1991

Dear Mr. Jameson,

Please accept this complementary copy of the Boston Common Management Plan. The City of Boston Parks and Recreation Department has been working on this plan since 1988, when parks officials and community groups began meeting to share concerns and ideas about this historic park.

The final plan was developed by Parks and Recreation Department staff in cooperation with a team from the Walker-Kluesing Design Group. They were assisted by the Friends of the Public Garden and Boston Common, a private organization which serves as an advocate for these open spaces.

If you would like more information about Parks Department publications, please write me a note which lists specific areas of interest.

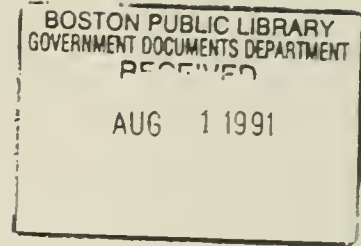
Sincerely,



Michael Quinlin
Director
Program Development







BOSTON COMMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

CITY OF BOSTON

BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION

DECEMBER 1990

The Honorable Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor

Lawrence A. Dwyer, Commissioner
Patrick Harrington, Deputy Commissioner
Victoria Williams, Assistant Commissioner
John Ruck, Executive Secretary

Associate Commissioners
William Doherty
Herbert Gleason
Charles Titus
William Walczak
Archie Williams

This Plan is dedicated to
Cherie L. Kluesing
and all who share a reverence
for Boston Common



Boston Common is the signature park of the City of Boston. Its expansive lawns and statuesque shade trees still evoke the antique common from which it evolved and provide all citizens, from every neighborhood in the city, a green oasis in the center of downtown Boston.

The respect and care we give Boston Common symbolizes our collective public wealth and commitment to the maintenance and preservation of our rich and extensive open space system. The importance of holding above all else the intangible value of history as well as a clean, green and safe Boston Common cannot be overstated. I commend the Parks Commission for its publication of this landmark document which will protect the Common and guide its management into the next century.

Raymond L. Flynn

Raymond L. Flynn
Mayor



Boston Common is, for the Parks and Recreation Department, the heart of our park system. What we do in the Common, we strive to do throughout the entire 2,200 acre park system. Nowhere are the parks system's beauties and pleasures more enjoyed.

This management plan serves first as a bible for all who will endeavor on the Common – those who are repairing facilities, those who maintain it, and those who may wish to contribute in any way. It will also serve as a model document to help the City of Boston grow as open space management professionals for all our parks and playgrounds.

It is with pleasure and pride that I present this plan on behalf of the Parks Commission and all the staff members and citizens who joined together to create it.

Lawrence A. Dwyer

Lawrence A. Dwyer
Commissioner



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan represents a consensus about the vision, administration, maintenance and capital improvements necessary in managing Boston Common into the next century. It could not have been possible without the contribution of many public agencies and concerned private citizens. The Parks Commission gratefully acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:

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FOREWORD

Boston Common is imperiled by the very people who love it most. As the nation's oldest public ground, as the site of many historic occurrences, the Common has taken on a symbolic importance. It is the chosen site to hold events. The Common and adjacent Public Garden together form the sole significant green refuge in the center of the city which receives the working population of metropolitan Boston. The play area and little league diamond make it a neighborhood park for Chinatown, Bay Village, Beacon Hill and Back Bay. A number choose to vend their wares here. The beginning of the Freedom Trail on the Common eventually attracts virtually every tourist who comes to Boston. Environmentally, it is threatened by increased shadow and winds caused by redevelopment in the city on its eastern flank. Socially, it reflects problems of the city in microcosm. Physically, the oldest park in the United States is worn. For 356 years activities from pasturage to promenading to rallies have been allowed on Boston Common, and we are forced today by its overuse to decide what is not allowed.

Every city park requires multiple services to keep it green and clean and safe. First and foremost, it needs maintenance of its surfaces, its infrastructure, and the living collection held within. Secondly, it requires a regular investment in its capital plant. Examples include the restoration of buildings and monuments, replenishment of soils and trees and the furnishing of visitor amenities such as drinking fountains. Finally, a park needs stewardship, a group of people whose initiative assures that these things happen and who inform others about why they should.

Boston Common is blessed with a number of stewards. The Parks Department takes the predominant role for the city as caretaker. The Friends of the Public Garden and Common make significant contributions as primary advocate. The communities immediately surrounding this five sided open space have vested interests in their neighborhood park. The business community and the tourism industry see the Common as a cultural attraction and amenity. The Common by law belongs to the citizens of Boston, a fact which personalizes the responsibility citizens have traditionally taken there. No change in land use may be made without a vote of Boston's citizens. Likewise no change in policy should be made without community consensus.



To emphasize the importance of protecting this cherished public resource, the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission has adopted the Boston Common Management Plan. Written by staff and Walker•Kluesing Design Group within an inclusionary public process, the plan provides all Bostonians with a guide. The document defines those attributes of the Common we collectively wish to preserve for future generations, institutes policies regarding its maintenance and administration, sets forth a master plan to guide its future capital investment, and clarifies how we must all coordinate to implement the plan.

Weaving the threads of political and social history, the plan presents a tapestry of existing conditions which underlies decision making. The plan is a tool to help monitor future use and improvement. The plan provides a shopping list for those who wish to invest in our national heritage through donation or service. Finally, the plan acknowledges that shepherding our oldest and most venerated public ground will require limits and restrictions on use and capital improvements so that future generations will enjoy its historic richness and green beauty.

Today Boston Common is in peril and the responsibility for its preservation is great. The plan which follows responds to these needs. The city invites all citizens to join with government in meeting the challenge.



Boston Common - 1988

SUMMARY OF GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL

The Boston Parks and Recreation Commission adopts the Boston Common Management Plan as policy, guiding Boston Common into the 21st century.

The legacy of the Common, expressed in its landscape character and passive nature, is to remain a green oasis in the center of Boston.

The Common shall be accessible to all, but individuals and groups shall not infringe on the rights of others. Privatization of its spaces is prohibited. Commercial activities are restricted.

General Parks and Recreation Department rules and regulations are in force on the Common.

The plan is intended to be long range and therefore flexible. Specific project designs and priorities will be re-examined in light of current issues and needs at the time of implementation.

MAINTENANCE

General maintenance levels and standards shall be high and consistent, and must recognize that the Common will receive higher use and stress than other parks.

Maintenance considerations shall be incorporated into the design of capital improvements.

Routine maintenance must be provided for all utilities.

ADMINISTRATION

All applicable laws and regulations governing protection of the Common shall be enforced, notably those addressing environmental quality and preservation of historic resources.

The Parks Department will maintain effective working relationships with all agencies and community groups whose activities have an impact upon the Common. Public/private partnerships will be fostered.

The plan emphasizes public safety and security along with revitalization, preservation and maintenance.

Coherent administration guidelines and their consistent enforcement, herein articulated, will guard against stresses that threaten the Common through overuse.

Vendors shall not exceed current numbers and may diminish in numbers. Placement of vendors is strictly controlled. Vendors' wares shall directly contribute to enjoyment of the Common. Licenses are to be issued annually.

Special events permits shall be granted at the sole determination of the Parks Department in terms of suitability, precedent, ability of the applicant to organize the event, safety, security, stress, potential damage and availability. Specific areas of the Common are designated for events, each with different criteria. Other sites shall be recommended for events considered harmful to the Common or disruptive to the general user or neighbors.

Vehicle access and control will be enforced for the Parks Department, other agencies, contractors, vendors and special events personnel. No unauthorized vehicles shall be permitted. Access points and times will be specified on permits. Emergency access will be maintained.

Continued and improved safety and security by Parks in cooperation with Boston Police and Boston Park Rangers will be a primary focus of administration for the Common.

HORTICULTURE

The landscape character of the Common, as expressed through vegetation, shall emphasize what has evolved historically: expansive lawns and deciduous shade trees forming a high canopy.

Replanting shall emphasize allees of trees on those pathways which run from edge to edge as well as selectively placed groves of trees over lawns.

Species diversity shall be encouraged for shade trees. Small ornamental trees and shrubs are discouraged. Floral plantings are discouraged but will be selectively allowed at edges and monuments.

Regular and appropriate care shall be taken for all trees.

Regular and optimum turf maintenance is required for all lawn areas, particularly those which are used frequently for events.

BUILT ELEMENTS

Overall, hard surfaces shall be reduced by one acre to emphasize the Common's soft green character.

No more of the Common's land at its edges shall be taken for roadways.

Buildings and structures shall be reused where deemed appropriate, or removed if no use can be found for them or if their character does not contribute to the Common. Redesign or reuse of existing structures is allowed under close scrutiny.

The plan supports the city's Adopt-A-Statue Program and the Boston Art Commission's recommendation to institute a waiting period for proposed additional works of art.

The plan supports the completion of the renovation of Central Burying Ground in accordance with the Historic Cemetery Master Plan of 1986.

The plan supports refinement and completion of the 1986 Signage Plan.

Pathways must be renovated to provide a coherent and safe system for all users and for authorized and emergency vehicles.

Pathway design recommendations defer to the soft green nature of the Common and will follow recommendations of the 1989 Boston Common Pathway Plan. Important alignments shall be respected. Redundant paths shall be removed. Views and vistas shall be protected.

Plaza and edge pavings may receive special design attention, but must be compatible with the nature of the Common and interface with the urban edge. Edges shall receive further consideration in regard to gateways, access, special plantings and signage.

Perimeter fencing shall be reinstated where it has been removed along the Charles Street edge and along Tremont Street.

Recommendations for furnishings (benches, bubblers, trash receptacles, bollards, internal fencing, signs, telephones, flagpoles and call boxes) are coordinated with the pathway system. Seating shall be limited in types. Existing seat walls shall be eliminated.

The ball fields and tennis courts will be retained as will the children's play area. The addition or expansion of structured sports and active recreation activity areas is not recommended.

Service facilities such as the maintenance yard shall be retained unless obsolete. The expansion or addition of service facilities is not recommended.

Expansion of underground facilities which limits the ability of the Common to support turf and shade trees is prohibited.

Utilities will be improved according to the 1991 Utility Plan.

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A Snow Scene on Boston Common (Courtesy of Boston Athenaeum)

INTRODUCTION

For 356 years Boston Common has been a green oasis in an expanding city and a mirror reflecting the broad range of events unfolding in Boston and the nation. Since 1634 this ground has served concurrent purposes as:

- Boston's most popular outdoor place for public assembly;
- Central Boston's premier green space (since 1837 with the Public Garden as its companion); and
- A much needed neighborhood park.

Throughout its history Boston Common has responded to evolving needs with physical change. This is not a static landscape frozen in time. Rather it reflects the dynamic character of the City of Boston and its citizens who have found ways to safeguard, renew, revitalize and improve this living green heritage. Awareness of recent landscape decline in the Common has prompted the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission to institute this plan.

The management plan seeks to present an orderly way of thinking about Boston Common that builds on precedent and recent experience. The Common is defined by and revered for its central location, its history, its green rolling lawns and tall deciduous shade trees. Protection of these qualities must address several factors in a management scheme that combines direct responsibility of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department for daily and cyclical care and programming with less visible jurisdiction of others, such as for underground facilities. At the same time, the Boston Common Management Plan must address outside forces such as development in surrounding areas which erodes the environment of this 48 acre open space in downtown Boston by increasing numbers of users, and increasing wind and shadows.

The plan aims to guide the management of the Common into the next century and to protect its place as a truly extraordinary green oasis. Thus, the plan sets forth administrative policies and delineates guidelines for physical care.



The purpose of this Management Plan is fourfold:

- To guide park managers and administrators who are responsible for day to day and long term caretaking.
- To serve as a long term policy plan, adopted by the Parks Commission and reviewed each decade.
- To develop a Master Plan for operating and capital improvements along with a strategy for implementation.
- To foster public awareness for the venerability and vulnerability of Boston Common.

THE PUBLIC POINT OF VIEW

Citizens of Boston have always been involved in breathing new life into the Common through their stewardship and patronage. The citizens of the city, commonwealth and nation are players who change the dynamics of the Common from one decade to the next by creating a spectrum of celebrations and public events. They also voice significant and timely concerns.

Recurring themes in the Boston Common Management Plan are those stated at the Boston Common Forums, held February through March in 1989, and public meetings which followed, in correspondence and the nurturing advice of the many friends of the park. Several key ideas, crystallized by responses to questionnaires distributed at meetings, reveal a consistent public view of the Common. These thoughts and concerns, nearly universally expressed by the many public agencies, organizations and individuals interested in the Common's destiny, have provided the backbone of the plan:

- Regarding physical character, three factors define the nature of the Common and set it apart from other parks:

Its location in the heart of the city, prompted one citizen to remark that "no one can possibly live in Boston without crossing through Boston Common."

Its historic character, recalling events in the city's and the nation's past.

Its green character portrayed by generous lawns and large mature shade trees set in a dense urban context.

- Regarding use, Bostonians believe that the Common should be available to all. Exclusive use of an area by a single group is inappropriate. High intensity of use is also a concern as it increases wear and tear.
- Regarding maintenance and management, the most important issues are limiting encroachment on green space and providing a safe, secure environment for Boston residents, commuters and visitors.

Simply stated, people want a greener, cleaner, safer Boston Common that is "accessible to all."



HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF BOSTON COMMON

Boston Common has provided a stage for major historic events since 1634. The following summary portrays changes to the Common's physical nature as well as to its use over time. Boston Common does not reflect the planning of one era or the design of a particular individual or firm. Although Frederick Law Olmsted incorporated the Common as an anchor of the "Emerald Necklace" park system which he designed, it predates the creation of Olmsted's Boston parks by two centuries.

Today's cherished Common reflects both continuity and change. Our chronology establishes a framework for setting goals and identifying design principles to protect the important characteristics of the Common into the 21st century.



Plan of Boston in the 1640s



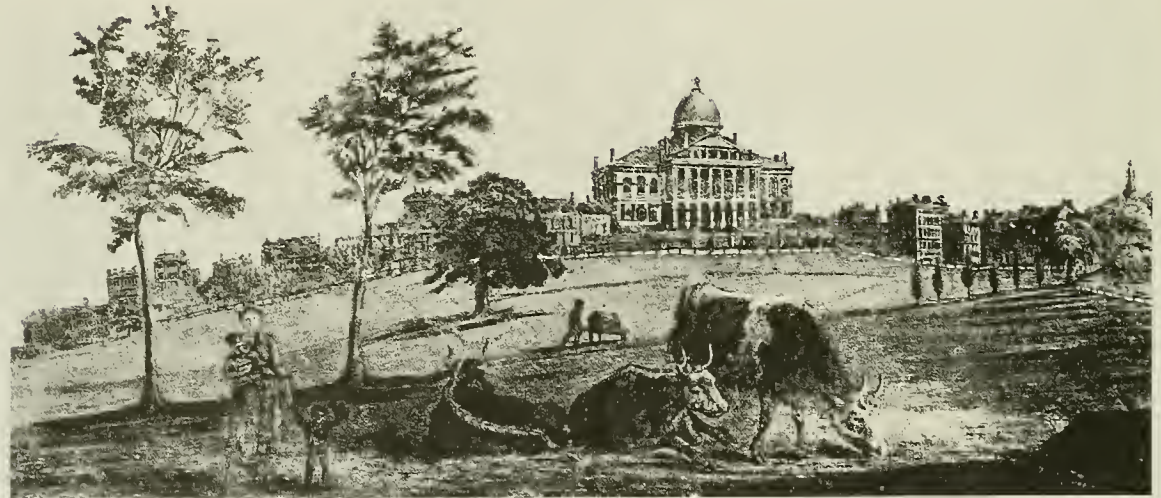
ESTABLISHMENT (1634-1830)

The significance of Boston Common begins with its establishment by the people for their collective benefit in 1634. In early years the character of the Common was utilitarian and functional. Decorative embellishments and its park-like nature came later.

In spite of some early improvements such as wood fencing and rows of trees on Tremont Street, at the time of the Revolution the Common was open pasture which ran downhill to salt marshes along the river's tidal edge near where Charles Street is today.

During the 17th century the main recreational pastime on the Common was promenading. The first formalized walkway on the Common was laid out in 1675. This began a process of changing the physical appearance of the Common. By the beginning of the 19th century the Common had malls around its entire periphery. These tree lined walks provided shady spots for strolling as the area surrounding the Common became built up with more substantial houses. Tremont Street Mall was renamed Lafayette Mall in 1824 in tribute to the assistance provided to the colonists by General Lafayette.

*Dobbins sketch of Boston Common - 1804
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*



The TOWN of BOSTON

IN
New England
by
John Bonner
1722



Boston

A. Planted Anno Domini 1630	a. Lion House
B. the Old Course 1630	b. Governor's House
C. Old North 1630	c. South Church School
D. Old South 1639	d. North Church School
E. Annals built 1630	e. North Church
F. Old of England 1606	f. Westing School
G. South S ^t Church 1639	g. Olds House
H. Quaker 1720	h. Greenwell
I. Old North 1714	i. North S ^t Church 1712
J. Old South 1716	j. House near 1000
K. Church 1716	k. 1000 Brick, 1000 Timber
L. Old North Church 1721	l. From 15000 English

Great Fire

1630	1631
1636	1636
1637	1639
1638	1638
1639	1639
1639	1639
1639	1639
1639	1639
1639	1639
1639	1639

Gener. Altitude

April 1649
June 1648
Sept 1652
Nov 1652
Jan 1659
Apr 1659
July 1659
Oct 1659
Jan 1661
Apr 1661

Engraven and Printed by P^rs. Deering Boston NE 1722

The Bonner plan of Boston - 1722

Park Street Mall and Beacon Street Mall followed soon after. This may have been a result of the formalization of Park, Beacon and Tremont Streets by architect Charles Bulfinch in 1791. Ridge Path, now Railroad Mall, appears to have been the first formal internal path, constructed in the early 1800s. It had a strong axial relationship between Park Street Church (1809) and Park Square. Lyman, Quincy and Armstrong paths followed rather quickly, forming a cross at the east end of the Common in front of the State House (1795). This was later replaced by Liberty Mall.

Along with providing grazing land, the Common served as the training ground for local militia. British soldiers encamped on the Common for eight years before and during the Revolution. By that time, the Common had also begun to serve as one of the town's main gathering places for rallies and celebrations. The Almshouse (on Beacon Street), the Granary, the Workhouse and the Bridewell (jail) were erected along the edge of the Common to serve the community along what is now the eastern side of Park Street.

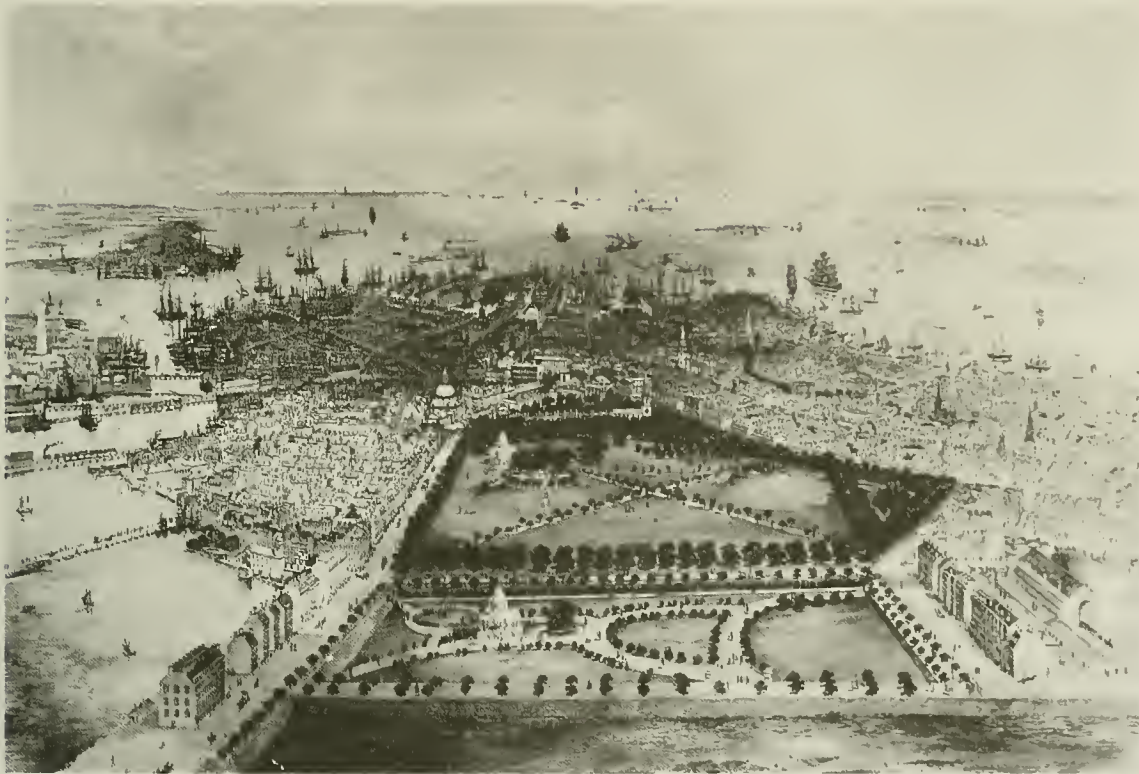


*The Great Elm on Boston Common
- 1842
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND EMBELLISHMENT (1830-1890)

During the 19th century, improvements changed the Common into the pleasure and recreation grounds we recognize today. These endeavors in civic pride were accomplished with public funds as well as individual patronage, group patronage and project subscription.

The wounds on the Common's surface from the British occupation during the Revolution began to disappear. When cows were banned in 1830, the grounds were significantly regraded, leveling hills and filling ponds to accommodate people better. About 600 trees were planted in the interior of the Common and expanses of open lawn replaced former pastures. Early recreation and athletic uses of the Common were unstructured and informal. They included kite flying, hoop rolling and sledding.



*Bird's Eye View of Boston - 1850
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*

In addition, tree lined, diagonal walks like Brimmer Path and Long Path, now Oliver Wendell Holmes Mall, were constructed during this period. More leisurely, meandering paths also appeared making the overall pathway system relatively complex. From 1824 to 1836, a decorative cast iron fence was placed around the entire Common. Gates, like the Charles Street Gate (1836) at the corner of Charles and Beacon Streets, were built to define and accentuate main entrances. Four of these granite gate posts also still remain at the corner of Charles and Boylston Streets. The fences and gates effectively protected the Common from problems associated with random access by reducing the need for countless walkways to accommodate more numerous entrances.

In 1848, with the opening of the municipal water system, the once muddy Frog Pond became a formal fountain with a 90 foot high jet of water. Use of the Frog Pond included sailing toy boats, wading and skating.

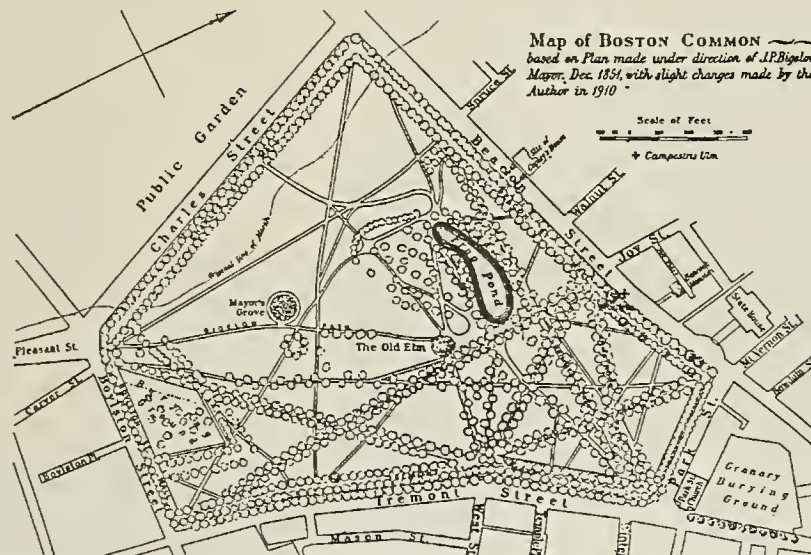
In December of 1851 Boston's City Engineer prepared a plan of the Common for Mayor Bigelow showing the locations and names of all trees. By this time, a large proportion of the English Elms planted in the early 18th century had died or been cut down by the British occupation forces and had been replaced with other trees, mostly American Elms. The plan indicated 1,255 trees, primarily large shade trees. Elms made up 57% of the total. Evergreen trees, mostly at the Mayor's Grove, accounted for 27%. There were no small "ornamental" or flowering trees. Most trees were located in allees along malls and paths. Scattered trees appeared in only a few locations, primarily around the Frog Pond and Central Burying Ground.

The Civil War (1861-65) once again brought military related activities to the Common. Recruiting drives, abolitionist meetings, regimental farewells and returning welcomes typified these years.

In the 19th century, as working hours grew shorter and the possibility for leisure grew, so did the demand for facilities to accommodate this freedom. Improvements were made by adding more fencing, fountains, furnishings, monuments and memorials. The major works completed during this time include the Brewer Fountain (1868), Soldiers and Sailors Monument (1877) and Boston Massacre Memorial (1888).

Beacon Street Mall - 1858
(Courtesy of Boston Athenaeum)

Plan of Boston Common - 1851



EARTHWORKS, ENGINEERING AND MODERNIZATION (1890-1950)

This era began with construction of America's first subway which apparently precipitated a major landscape and soil improvement effort. The surface character of the Common changed radically with the practice of building beneath it. The fence along Tremont Street was removed in 1895 and was not replaced. Tremont Street also lost its tree planted mall to the construction. At this time, the Park Street and Boylston Street Station headhouses were built.

The filling and regrading probably prompted the next major earthwork efforts, restoration of the soil and relocation of major trees orchestrated by the Olmsted firm. A 1910 plan indicates a total of 812 trees on the Common. Random or scattered plantings then existed around the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. More memorials and other urban park features were added, continuing the transformation of the Common that had begun in the early 1900s.

Perhaps because the Common appeared to be reaching completion, new improvements tended to be self contained and related to hard materials. More objects appeared such as the Robert Gould Shaw/54th Massachusetts Regiment Memorial (1897), Parkman Memorial Bandstand (1912), Curtis Guild Memorial Entrance (1917) and Founders Memorial (1930). Old elements were modified. For instance, the Frog Pond received a concrete bottom (1923).



Another war, World War I, altered activities. Sizable victory gardens were cultivated, bonds were sold, and large crowds attended various war related activities, including a final victory celebration. Liberty Mall was built. Brewer Fountain was relocated to its current position along Tremont Street setting precedent for small plazas along the most urbanized edge of the Common. The remaining gravel and dirt paths were paved. Again new fences and gateways were built. Permanent seating was added (the wood and concrete type benches predominant today). As automobile traffic increased, Tremont, Boylston, Park and Charles streets were widened, nibbling away at the edges of the Common.

United States participation in World War II (1941-1945) had its impact on the Common with the removal of most of the decorative iron fence for scrap iron. Victory in Japan Day brought joyful crowds to the Common.



*Soldiers on the Common during WWII
(Courtesy of the Boston Globe)*

*Excavation for the subway along Tremont
Street - circa 1895
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*

URBAN RENEWAL AND PRESERVATION (1950 to present)

The emphasis in the latter half of the twentieth century has been on revitalization, rather than on additions or changes. The vehicle for such improvement has evolved over the decades from "urban renewal" to "historic preservation."

The Freedom Trail was created in the 1950s, beginning on Boston Common and linking it with 15 other sites associated with the Revolution. However, the post war decade was generally marked by decline in downtown Boston as in other older American urban centers. In the 1960s the promises of urban renewal brought the tri-level underground parking garage with four kiosk entrances, the Visitor Information Center at Tremont and West streets, the Parkman Plaza sculptures (1961) and greater winds and shadows cast by Tremont on the Common, downtown's first high-rise apartment building.

Underground parking garage entrance kiosk - 1989

Liberty Mall - 1989



In 1972, a master plan addressing rehabilitation needs for Boston Common and the Public Garden was developed for the Parks and Recreation Department by Carol R. Johnson Associates. In the next few years fencing, new tot lot equipment and other amenities were added and pathways were improved. In addition, rehabilitation was undertaken on existing elements such as the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Parkman Bandstand, Lafayette Mall and Parkman Plaza. The Friends of the Public Garden and Common, concerned citizens and neighbors, was founded in 1970 as an advocacy group for these spaces. The Boston Landmarks Commission, created in 1975, designated the Common as a landmark in 1977.

Portions of the perimeter fence were reconstructed along Beacon and Park Streets in 1978. The extant lengths of the original or its facsimile are slightly taller and less ornate than the fence around the adjacent Public Garden. A 1974 iron picket fence surrounds the Central Burying Ground and Deer Park maintenance yard.

After Proposition 2-1/2 was passed in the early 1980s, the Common and all other city parks experienced significant decline due to lack of funding. In the summer of 1986, spurred by community indignation, Mayor Flynn personally ushered in this latest reclamation. Since then a number of physical design improvements have been undertaken by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, encouraged by other public agencies and private organizations.



The most recent tree inventory, prepared in May of 1988, listed 743 trees. This number is about 60% of the 1851 survey, primarily due to the decline and loss of mall plantings particularly along Tremont and Charles streets. While tree diversity has risen somewhat, Elms still account for almost 40% of the total. The total number of Elms is less than half of that noted in 1851. This loss can be attributed to Dutch Elm Disease and the natural aging process.

As always, events on the Common are reflections of the time, providing views of the major moods, trends and realities of the city, the commonwealth and the nation. Over the past 350 years, public addresses have been made by Presidents George Washington and Franklin Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Pope John Paul II and many other important national and international leaders. Public rallies have ranged from early tea tax protests to civil rights demonstrations, anti-war protests and more recent anti-nuclear and pro-choice demonstrations. In the 19th century balloon ascensions, jubilees, festivals, political conventions, revivalist meetings and extravagant holiday observances were held along with demonstrations of fire engines, flying machines and electricity. The Dairy Festival, Palm Sunday Service, First Night and the annual parade of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company are only a few examples of events seen on the Common today. Approximately 200 permits were issued for events in 1990.

The Boston Common has undergone many changes since its creation in 1634. The site originally contained four hills and three ponds. Only Flagstaff Hill remains. The Frog Pond has been reshaped and resurfaced. The physical transformation of the perimeter has eroded the edges over the centuries. The next section deals with means of protecting Boston Common from further encroachment and preserving it for future generations.

*Martin Luther King on the Common
- 1965 (Courtesy of the Boston Globe)*



TIME LINE FOR BOSTON COMMON

- | | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| 1625 | Englishman William Blaxton settled on what is now the Common and became Boston's first non-native resident. | development of Beacon Street. His State House begun 1795. Tremont and Park streets developed; Common's buildings demolished to enhance value of new townhouses on these streets. |
| 1630 | Settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony moved to Boston proper from Charlestown to gain a supply of fresh water. | |
| 1634 | Each household assessed 6 shillings to buy "The Commonage" as pasture land for all. Grazing soon joined by maneuvers of the local militia, hangings, stocks, and strolling. | 1799 President John Adams' birthday celebrated. |
| 1640 | Citizens passed ordinance preventing lease or sale of the Common except by popular vote. | 1817 Gallows removed. |
| 1646 | Grazing restricted to 70 milk cows. Could substitute 4 sheep per cow. | 1815 Beacon Street Mall laid out. |
| 1660 | Mary Dyer and three other Quakers hanged on the Common. | 1822 City Charter established. Reaffirmed that Common be held intact except by majority vote of the citizens. |
| 1660-1738 | Civic facilities built along east (later Park Street) edge of Common: Granary Burying Ground, Granary, Almshouse, Bridewell (jail), Workhouse. | 1823 Charles Street Mall laid out. |
| 1675 | First walkway created on Boston Common. | 1824 French General Lafayette feted on Tremont Street Mall which henceforth bore his name. |
| 1728 | First tree lined pedestrian mall, Tremont Street edge. | 1830 Cows banned by ordinance. |
| 1756 | Central Burying Ground established on Boylston Street edge. | 1836 Decorative cast iron fence erected all around perimeter ushering in a new park-like era for the Common. |
| 1766 | Great celebration on Common for repeal of Stamp Act. | 1837 Nation's first public botanical park, the Public Garden, established on filled-in former marshland west of Common. |
| 1768 | British soldiers began 8 year encampment ; cut down trees for firewood and vengeance. | 1848 Muddy Frog Pond turned into formal pool with 90' high water plume to mark opening of municipal water system. |
| 1769 | Gallows replaced hanging tree. | 1860-1865 Civil War activities held including abolitionist rallies and Union Army recruiting drives. |
| 1789 | Victorious General Washington returned for celebration. | 1867 Gardner Brewer purchased monumental fountain at Paris Exposition. Soon erected on Common across from his Beacon Street house. In 1870s given to the city. Later moved to present location near Park Street Station. |
| 1791 | Charles Bulfinch began improving adjacent area with | 1869 Great Elm severely storm damaged. |

- 1876 Great Elm felled by winter storm.
- 1877 Soldiers and Sailors Monument erected on Flagstaff Hill.
- 1888 Memorial erected to honor the victims of Boston Massacre.
- 1895 Common and Garden dug up for construction of nation's first subway.
- 1897 Memorial erected to Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the Union's first free black regiment. Sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens; architect, Charles McKim; considered by many to be the nation's finest public work of art.
- 1910-1913 Olmsted brothers oversaw massive landscape renovation.
- 1912 Parkman Bandstand built to honor George F. Parkman who willed \$5 million to enhance several Boston parks. Designed by Robinson and Shepard.
- 1917 WWI temporary facilities (Victory Garden, Liberty Bond building) supplanted by permanent WWI memorial steps and Liberty Mall in front of the State House.
- 1927 First person to fly solo across Atlantic, Colonel Charles Lindbergh, encouraged crowd of 200,000 to support commercial aviation.
- 1936 On the campaign trail, President Franklin Roosevelt addressed 175,000.
- 1945 V-J celebration for victory over Japan capped WWII activities on the Common.
- 1950s Freedom Trail established. Temporary Visitor Information Center replaced by present building in 1967.
- 1961 Underground garage opened beneath Carty Parade Ground.
- 1965 Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke against school segregation upon completion of march from Roxbury.
- 1968-1970 Massive demonstrations to protest the Vietnam War.
- 1970 Friends of the Public Garden and Common founded.
- 1972 Master plan for physical rehabilitation prepared by Carol Johnson Associates for Boston Parks and Recreation Department. Ushered in improvements aimed at the 1976 Bicentennial year, and confirmed Boston's commitment to historic preservation.
- 1977 Common designated a Boston Landmark.
- 1979 Pope John Paul II celebrated his first Mass in North America before 400,000 people.
- 1981 Kick-off for campaign to restore the Shaw/54th Memorial, and start a comprehensive artwork restoration. By 1990 Shaw, Brewer Fountain, Commodore Barry, Founders Memorial, and Boston Massacre Monument had been restored, several under the city's Adopt-a-Statue public/private partnership program.
- 1987 Mayor Raymond L. Flynn pledged commitment to preserve the Common. City and State put in \$1.3 million pedestrian lighting system. City put an additional \$500,000 into general refurbishing of the Common and Garden. Common and Garden listed as National Historic Landmarks.
- 1989 Boston Common Management Plan launched with public forums. Paving removed between ball fields and tennis courts.
- 1990 Brewer Fountain restored. Play area equipment replaced. Deer Park maintenance facility refurbished. Park Street Mall narrowed and resurfaced. Handrail reconstructed at Shaw Memorial steps.

THE PARADIGM OF BOSTON COMMON AND THE PUBLIC GARDEN

To clarify the design principles that underpin the Common, the Management Plan looked for relevant comparisons between the Public Garden and the Boston Common. Together these two parks provide a large central green space of 75 acres linking various parts of the city. While they function together in their role as the major central city green space, it is important to understand the different character of each.

Both the genesis and character of the Public Garden contrast with those of the Common. Originally at the west edge of the Common, dry land gave way to the marshy edge of the Mill Pond. Established in 1837, the Public Garden was laid out in its present form in the 1860s. This model provides insights into various design strategies that are appropriate for one park, but not for the other.



Ice Skating in the Public Garden - 1989

The Paradigm

<u>Boston Common</u>	<u>Public Garden</u>
1st Public Park	1st Public Botanical Garden
Abstract	Ornamental
Plain	Decorative
Varied Topography	Flat
Existing Land	Landfill
Evolved	Invented
Pasture/Lawn	Botanical
Large & Small Memorials	Small Memorials
No Center	Centered on Pond
Partially Fenced	Fenced
Many Entrances	Limited Entrances
Many Structures	Few Structures
Active Recreation	No Active Recreation
Less Tight Rules	Tight Rules
Straight Paths	Curved Paths
Allee and Grove Planting	Specimen Planting
Flowers/Edges	Flowers/Interior
Vendors	No Vendors
Many Activities	Limited Activities

PROTECTION OF THE COMMON

The Common is symbolic of an emerging society that adapted traditions of its British heritage to form a remarkable set of institutions for organizing a new democratic nation. Boston Common began with two important premises:

- "Equal right of commonage" for pasturing a prescribed number of animals per householder.
- The idea that this land belonged to the citizens and not the government and could not be released "without consent of the major part of the inhabitants of the town."

Thus began our country's parkland heritage with the establishment and protection of Boston Common by the clear intent of local citizens.

The size (approximately 50 acres) and shape (5 sided parcel) of the Common have remained remarkably stable since 1634. However, bits and pieces have been taken for other uses. The Granary Burying Ground (established in 1660), as well as Tremont and Park streets are built on land originally belonging to the Common.

MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMON

Today, Boston Common still belongs to the people. However, in a more complex world, regulations once passed by Town Meeting are administered for the people by the City of Boston. The Boston Parks and Recreation Department is charged by the Parks Commission to be its management agent. The Boston Parks Commission was created by act of Legislature in 1875. The administration and management of the City's pre-1875 park and open space properties (Boston Common, the Public Garden and Commonwealth Avenue Mall) were not consolidated under its jurisdiction until 1912.

Permits for events and licensing of vendors have been established to preserve the public's enjoyment and appreciation of the Common, to prevent conflicts and to protect the grounds. The Common must continue to serve as a major forum for public meetings and events. (More specific information on issuance of permits can be found in the Administration section.)



Preserving the existing significant features, furnishings and architecture of the Common as well as ensuring that future additions conform to the historic character of the park is the responsibility of the Parks Department as well. In recent years lighting, signage and monument restoration have all received needed attention. Specific recommendations can be found in the Maintenance and Capital Improvements section.)

Known archaeological sites on the Common are protected. It has been surveyed for archaeological sites (Boston Landmarks Commission, 1988). Four areas are protected from digging greater than 4 inches. Other areas shall involve consultation with an archaeologist before excavation.

LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

Starting with the limits placed on the number of animals each household could pasture, the Common has been carefully regulated since its founding. Dumping has been continually prohibited. Now rules and policies have been re-examined for present and future administration of the Common. Many issues relate to the continual assessment of activities that impose stress on the Common, or change its democratic character such as: the number and nature of large events permitted; and the balance of active and passive recreation.

The Common is subject to all present laws and regulations. These include federal and state historical and environmental protection mechanisms, the Massachusetts General Laws, City Council ordinances, city regulatory legislation such as that of the Boston Parks Commission, Boston Landmarks Commission, Police Department, and Health and Hospitals. Clarifications or revisions may require action by federal or state agencies, the Boston Parks Commission, other city commissions or departments, City Council, home rule petition, and/or mayoral review. Rules of the Parks and Recreation Commission can be found in Appendix A.

ZONING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Substantial changes have been brought about by the widening of perimeter streets. The Common is now protected by legislation of 1971, Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution, which requires a 2/3 vote of the legislature for changes in the use of parkland.

Wind and shadows along Tremont Street are a significant problem now due to high-rise construction at this edge of the Common. New development projected for the Midtown Cultural District, which abuts the Common on Boylston and Tremont streets, is anticipated to double the existing population in the district. Along with increased stress on the Common from greater use, wind and shadow problems will be exacerbated.

To protect the Common from encroachment in the form of buildings that will cast shadows and increase winds, the City of Boston Zoning Commission amended the Boston Zoning Code in 1989 to include the Midtown Cultural District. The code limits building heights in the adjacent district and includes the Common as one of four protection areas. The code also sets forth General Design and Environmental Impact Standards. Subsequent state shadow legislation, called An Act Protecting Certain Public Commons, Chapter 362 of the Acts of 1990, set forth further shadow restrictions.

In addition, abutters are subject to Ordinance 7-4.11 of the City of Boston Zoning Code. This requires permission from the Parks and Recreation Commission for the erection or alteration of any building or structure within 100 feet of a public park.

It will be critical to enforce noise regulations on the Common especially for events as the residential and working population of adjacent areas increases. It will be equally important to shield the Common from construction and traffic noise to the extent possible.

INTERAGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES AND COORDINATION

Many public agencies must coordinate the administration of the Common. It is the responsibility of the Parks Department to establish and maintain strong lines of communication and guide coordination among agencies. All construction must be reviewed and licensed by the Parks Commission. Proposed development within 100 feet of park land is also subject to review by the Parks Commission, as referenced on the preceding page.

The Common abuts four historic districts listed in the National Register: Beacon Hill, Park Street, Piano Row and West Street. Boston Common itself is a National Historic Landmark as well as a Boston Landmark (1977). It thus requires approval for changes and improvements from the Boston Landmarks Commission and, under certain circumstances, the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

INTERAGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Boston Department of Public Works: Operates and maintains pedestrian lighting system and set up of stages for events (volunteer/not set responsibility).

Boston Edison Company: Maintains primary electric service running through the Common serving various areas of the city.

Boston Police Department: Provides public safety and law enforcement.

Boston Public Facilities Department: Building construction and renovation.

Boston Redevelopment Authority: Reviews proposed development.

Boston Transportation Department: Provides regulations and enforcement on streets bordering the Common.

Boston Water and Sewer Commission: Installs and maintains water supply and drainage lines.

Boys and Girls Club of Boston: Administers vendor permits as an agent of the Parks Department.

Capitol Police (of the Commonwealth): Provides security and enforcement on State House property.

Environment Department, City of Boston: Includes the Boston Landmarks Commission, City Archaeologist, Art Commission, Conservation Commission, and Noise and Air Quality Commission. Provides historic and environmental protection.

Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau: Operates the Visitor Center and furnishes information and service to tourists.

Massachusetts Convention Center Authority: Operates and maintains the underground parking garage.

Massachusetts Historical Commission: Operates at a state level to insure that the goals of historic preservation be considered in planning for the future development of the community.

Mayor's Office of Business and Cultural Development: Acts as the City's liaison with the business community and the tourism industry to facilitate special events and giving opportunities.

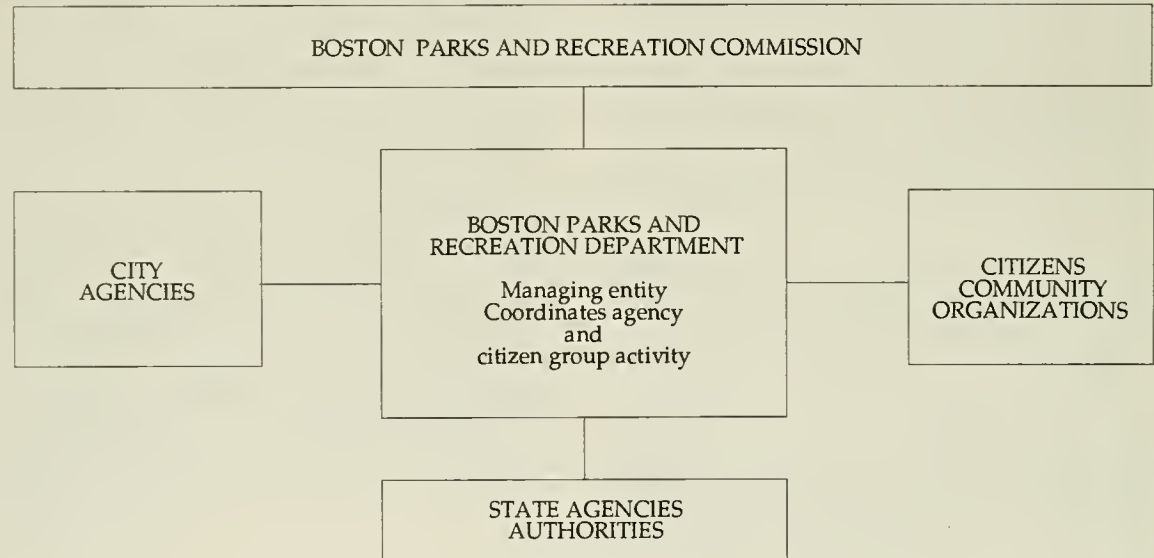
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority: Operates and maintains the underground transit.



FRIENDS GROUPS AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Volunteer groups are an asset to the Common. They foster an essential spirit of stewardship, assist the Parks Department and help build an active constituency for the Common. They also do much to increase public understanding of the unique character of Boston Common and bring needed energy and dollars for improvements. The Friends of the Public Garden and Common is the nonprofit organization that leads citizen efforts to preserve and enhance the Public Garden and Common, and to assure their continuance as places for quiet recreation, free from encroachment and exploitation. Other groups that may have specialized concerns regarding activities and facilities on the Common that serve or affect their neighborhood or viewpoint are also encouraged to participate.

-18-



ADMINISTRATION

The Common continues to be a seat of free speech and democracy in action. It is literally common ground. The Boston Parks and Recreation Department manages the Common so that it remains accessible to all, and at the same time prevents damage to and deterioration of its assets. This section of the plan articulates governing policies to ensure better management and allow America's oldest public park to serve future generations as our forefathers intended.

EVENTS

The Common is highly desired for special events and gatherings because of its central location and proximity to public transit, as well as its heritage and venerable stature. The large level parade ground, the bandstand with electric outlets, as well as the location of a maintenance yard in the Common provides support facilities for events.

Permit Process

A park use permit is required for any special programmed or organized use, activity or gathering that affects the use of the Common. Examples include a seasonal festival, a youth event, a political rally, a public theater event and a race start or finish line. Written application for a use permit must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department Programming Unit no fewer than 21 days in advance of the date being requested. Special arrangements for large events, staging, tents, sound equipment, barriers, security, service needs, provisions, clean up and assurances against damage must be made at least 30 days in advance.

Permits are issued solely at the discretion of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The department reserves the right not to issue a permit to use the Common if the size, timing or other factors connected to the proposed event may cause undue stress or risk to the Common, disruption of general use of the Common, and if another suitable public location can be provided by the city. In case of inclement weather, the Parks Department reserves the right to cancel the event without advance notice in order to protect the Common. In this case rescheduling of the event may be made based upon availability.



The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to review all requests for events and assign the appropriate space for an event. The Department is the sole determiner in questions of public safety, suitability and traffic issues and must consider Fire Department and Police Department ability to serve the downtown area as well as the Common. The Department will entertain a request for an event on the Common on the basis of the following criteria:

All event applications are considered on a first come, first serve basis.

The event does not unreasonably interfere with the enjoyment of the Common by the general public.

The event does not conflict with another previously approved event or similar event, even if that event is in a different section of the Common.

The sponsors of an event demonstrate adequate capacity to be held responsible for organization and management of the event including clean up and restoration of the Common.

City noise regulations for sound amplification are met.

The arrangement, logistics and the set up and the take down of the event do not require large trucks and heavy equipment that pose potential damage or hazard to the Common grounds, architecture and furniture, nor disrupt the public's peaceful enjoyment of the Common.

Bonds are posted to repair possible damage. In cases of financial hardship the Parks Commissioner may waive the posting of a bond if other criteria are met.

Alcoholic beverages are not served and events are not sponsored by alcoholic beverage companies.

In general an event date shall be at least two weeks after the last large event if the anticipated attendance of each is 2,000 or more people.

Appropriate Types of Events

The Common must be protected from excessive commercialization. No portion of the Common shall be closed to the public for commercial or other private use. Partitioning off portions of the Common for an event by fencing or other means shall be prohibited except when necessary for public safety. Events, particularly those near paths and entrances, must not impede pedestrian traffic.

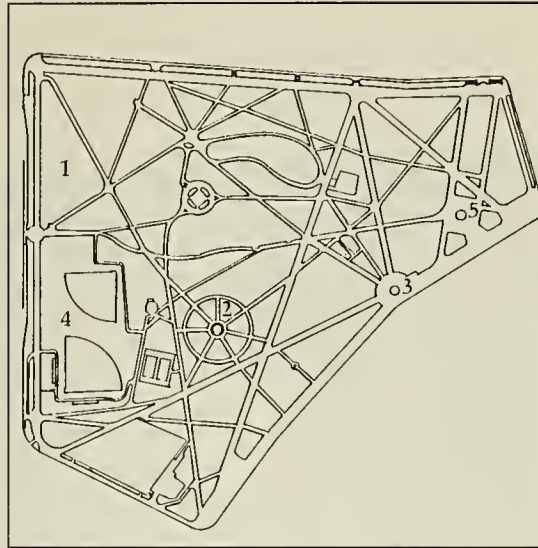
Public speaking is permitted on the Common. This is defined as 1 to 3 people alternately reading from a text or speaking extemporaneously to the general, walking public. Literature may be distributed but not sold and distributors must pick up and properly dispose of discarded papers. Entertainers must have permits and conform to rules for special activities. Sound amplification may or may not be permitted, depending on the nature, size and location of the event.

Recruiting on Flagstaff Hill - 1862
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)



APPROPRIATE EVENT LOCATIONS

- 1 Carty Parade Ground
- 2 Parkman Bandstand
- 3 Parkman Plaza
- 4 Cusick Field and the Little League Ball Field
- 5 Brewer Fountain



Appropriate Event Locations

There are five basic areas for permitted events on the Common: Carty Parade Ground, Parkman Bandstand, Parkman Plaza, the ball fields and Brewer Fountain. Each area and its specific criteria follow:

Carty Parade Ground

- For all events expected to attract over 500 people and requiring a stage and/or sound system.
- Events shall be limited to a maximum of 10,000 people at any one time.
- This is the only area of the Common where tents are permitted, provided that their location and staking method prevent damage to the roof of the underground garage. No tent should remain erected for longer than 72 hours including setup and breakdown time.

Parkman Bandstand

- For public speaking or music including live entertainment and rallies expected to draw not more than 500 people.
- Amplified sound may be allowed.

Parkman Plaza

- For temporary displays or programs designed to attract the interest of the general walking public.
- Displays may involve tables not more than 8 feet long and/or easel set ups or graphics no higher than 8 feet.
- Public speaking is allowed and free of charge literature is allowed to be distributed.
- Amplified sound is not allowed.

Cusick Field and the Little League Ball Field

- For sports only.
- No vehicles except Park Department maintenance vehicles are allowed in this area.
- Amplified sound may be allowed.

Brewer Fountain

- For programs designed to attract only the general walking public and not requiring vehicular setup for displays.
- Amplified sound is not allowed.

-22- *Event at Carty Parade Ground - 1988*



Overflow from State House rallies

The area below the Shaw/54th Memorial may be used to accommodate overflow from rallies across the street at the State House. The responsibility to arrange in advance for adequate security, traffic and extra space needs shall fall on the sponsors and must be coordinated with the Capitol Police, the Boston Transportation Department and the Boston Common Administrator.

Times for Events

To make the Common available to as many people as possible, a strict time limit is set for events using space on the Common. Any single event shall not be scheduled for more than 5 consecutive days including set up and take down time. Events anticipating or having a history of 2,000 or more participants shall be spaced at least two weeks apart. Events scheduled for Parkman Plaza shall be limited to one week per month. Only one event at a time may be scheduled in the Parade Ground. The Department at its discretion may schedule two events on any day only if one event is at Parkman Bandstand and the other is at Carty Parade Ground. Events generally shall occur between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm. Evening events will be considered on a case by case basis taking into account public safety, size, residential neighbors and city sound regulations.

Amplification

The City of Boston ordinance limits sound levels in a Residential/Commercial area to 65 decibels/25 hertz and to daytime hours (7 am to 6 pm). Amplified music or sound should only be permitted on the Parade Ground, Bandstand and on the ball fields. The system for amplifying sound shall be operated by a city approved engineer. No amplified sound shall be turned on before 10:00 am except for the purposes of a sound check. Permits which include the use of amplified sound shall be issued on a one time use basis. The rest of the Common shall be considered a quiet zone and a peaceful refuge away from amplified sound including loud radios, cassette and CD players and the like.

Bonds

Performance bonds shall be posted for all organized events on the Common to assure prompt and complete cleanup and restoration of all damage. The required value of performance bonds will be reviewed annually. The amounts stated below may be adjusted at the discretion of the Parks Commissioner with demonstration of hardship by the applicant/sponsor.

All performance bonds will be made out to the Fund for Parks and Recreation in Boston and submitted to the Parks Department within 48 hours of the receipt of the permit. The bond will be kept by the Parks Department and promptly returned if the conditions of the permit are met and if the condition of the Boston Common is at least as good as it was before the event. The bond or a portion thereof equal to the cost of repair of damage will be retained by the Parks Department if, in the opinion of the Department, the permittee fails to meet either of these two conditions. The permittee may appeal the decision to the Parks and Recreation Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Performance Bonds

Event Area	\$/Event	\$/Event for non profit or public agency
Parade Ground	\$5,000	\$2,500
Parkman Bandstand	2,500	1,000
Parkman Plaza	500	250
Brewer Fountain	100	100
Cusick Field	100	100

Event at Parkman Bandstand - 1990



Insurance

All sponsors of events anticipating or having a history of attracting over 500 participants must provide liability insurance coverage in conformance with City of Boston requirements.

If an application for a permit is approved, the Parks Department will draft the permit in the form of an agreement between the Parks Department and the person or group requesting the permit. The Permit Agreement will be first signed by the person or group requesting the permit and then signed by the Parks Commissioner. The Permit Agreement will include the Rules and Regulations and any other relevant documents such as: parade permit, insurance policy, and maps of delivery routes and electrical hookups for the set up of the event. The person requesting the event will sign the Permit Agreement indicating that he/she has read and understands the regulations and will abide by them. Permit documents must be in hand by the event organizers on the day of their event and on site at all times.

SPORTS PERMITS

The Common's convenient central location for city residents creates a high demand for its sports facilities. The baseball and softball diamonds on the Common are considered among the most desirable in the city. The lights for night use make these facilities even more attractive.

Sports facilities can exacerbate some problems such as parking or driving on the Common during ball games. The lack of sanitary facilities and limited bleacher seating also can be drawbacks.

The Parks Programming Unit issues permits for ball fields specifying hours of use, numbers of attendees and responsibilities such as police details, clean up plans, portable toilets and vehicle control. In case of rain, teams shall be responsible for calling the Parks Programming Unit to ascertain whether ball fields are open. The two tennis courts on the Common are available on a first come, first serve basis.

Softball Game - 1988



VENDORS

Vendors on the Common bring income to local businesses and provide visitor amenities, jobs and revenues for youth programs. There are also drawbacks. Not long ago vendor carts and parked vehicles blocked sidewalks and drove without restriction on the Common. This has been brought under control by designating locations for vendors, banning sausage vendors (who spill grease on paved surfaces) and restricting times for vehicle access. Still, the litter of users remains a concern, as does illegal vending during events. Vendor management and individual vendor licenses are supervised using the following guidelines.

Vendor Guidelines

The licensing of vending operations remains under the sole authority of the Parks Department.

Vending activities are monitored on a regular basis to assure compliance with the limits and restrictions of the permit.

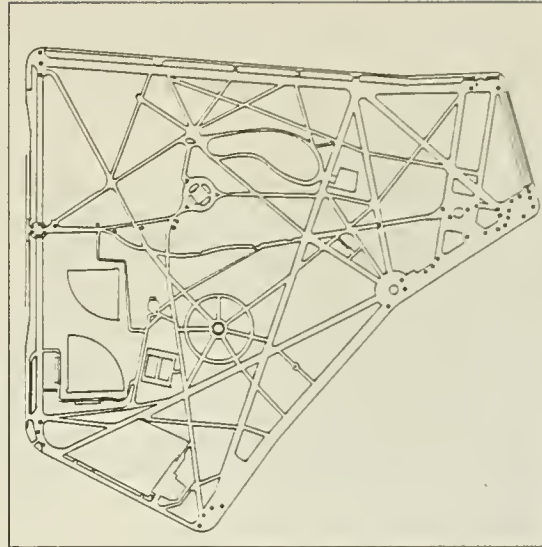
Locations for vendors have been established and are maintained to avoid congestion, blockage of walkways, unauthorized vehicles or any activity detrimental to the park's maintenance and appearance.

The total maximum number of vendors is established at the current level of 54 and may be redistributed or reduced at any given time.

New licenses will be restricted to sales of items relevant to the use and enjoyment of the Common as a public park such as foods and drinks.

Vendor carts must conform to general size and appearance guidelines established by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The fee for vendor permits will be reviewed annually to insure adequate return for the physical and maintenance burdens caused by vending operations.



VENDOR LOCATION PLAN

*Apple Vendor
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*



Lemonade Vendor - 1989

Vendors will be required to participate in the daily maintenance of their areas of the Common.

Vendors shall observe drop off/set up time before 9:30 am and pick-up/breakdown after 6:00 pm daily.

VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CONTROL

The presence of vehicles on the Common detracts from the quiet, green, pastoral atmosphere which is fundamental to the Common. Vehicles must be allowed on the Common for the necessary purposes of maintenance, repair, capital improvement and programming. However, vehicles have been and remain a serious problem for public safety and the health and appearance of the Common. Both agency and private vehicles contribute to this problem, including Park Department vehicles, commercial service and construction vehicles, and police patrol cars. Another suitable location will be offered by the City for events that require large vehicles.

The following vehicular policy shall be enforced:

Authorization

Significant damage is done to the Common every year by vehicles including: damage to trees, furniture, fencing, monuments and memorials; pollution of soil and staining of pavement by dripping oil and grease; erosion of turf particularly at turning points; dangerous and unsightly depressions and ruts in lawn areas; and compaction of soils affecting both lawns and trees.

No unauthorized person shall drive any vehicle upon any sidewalk or lawn of the Common. A written application for vehicles is required and the permit must be displayed. Police shall support this policy with standard ticketing procedures. More effective enforcement would result if the Parks Department could obtain ticketing power.

Access

The Common has too many potential points of entry where vehicles can jump the curb and park on the lawn. There are no gates or gate guards to monitor vehicular access. Many walks are too narrow or too lightly built for vehicles. There has been a general reluctance of groups and agencies to limit the size and number of their vehicles.

Vehicles over 5 tons gvw (gross vehicle weight) for any program or event are not permitted. Vendor vehicles are limited to 5 tons gvw and must stay on designated pathways. Delivery vehicles for events scheduled at the Bandstand are limited to 1-1/2 tons gvw.

Vehicle access to the Boston Common will be at three points only: Deer Park entrance on Boylston Street, MacArthur Mall at Boylston and Charles, and at Charles and Beacon streets. Access control must be assured by administrative and physical means. Entrance shall be clearly marked with curb cuts and painted for identification.

Routes

The entrance, exit, route and parking space for all vehicles will be illustrated on a map drawn by the Parks Department which will be attached to the permit. Trucks over one ton shall drive only on MacArthur, Liberty and Railroad malls and other paths as indicated on a map issued with a permit. Vehicles may not drive on paths narrower than the vehicle. Care must be exercised in turning to avoid damage to edges at intersections. Driving on the grass is prohibited for events and is permissible only as required for construction and maintenance work.

Vehicular Agreements and Permits

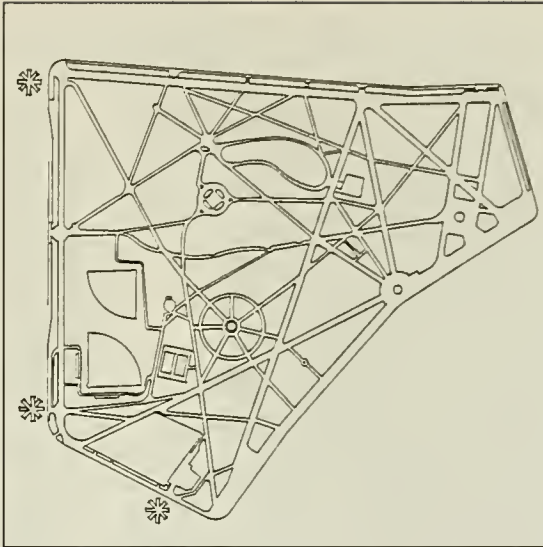
Delivery vehicles for events or construction will be issued a paper permit giving the times of delivery and the expiration of the permit. Vehicles allowed to remain during the event or construction project will have a different paper permit. All issued permits are to be prominently displayed through the windshield of vehicles. Vehicular and parking agreements will be drawn up and signed by the contractor before any construction project can begin. Parking shall only occur in designated areas. Vehicles and equipment must be parked in designated locations on hard surfaces when inactive and their security and any liability shall be the responsibility of the owner/operator.

Contractors/Construction

This policy affects all vehicles belonging to contractors hired by the Boston Parks Department, the MBTA, Boston Edison, Boston Water and Sewer Department or any other agency outside of the City of Boston including subcontractors, suppliers and employees. Contractors working in the Common will be required to submit a full listing of all work related/required vehicles and equipment to the Common Administrator before work begins. Such vehicles shall display the permit signed by the Common Administrator. No unauthorized cars are permitted to be parked in the Common for any reason. The construction of temporary parking lots on the Common for construction vehicles will not be permitted. Contractor vehicles will be required to follow general Common vehicle rules. Plywood must be used under vehicles to protect the ground in wet weather.

Speed

Vehicles shall not exceed speeds of 5 miles per hour or no faster than pedestrians walking on the path. Pedestrians shall be given the right of way. Drivers shall exercise all precautions to ensure public safety.



VEHICULAR ACCESS PLAN

Other

Cleaning or repair of vehicles is prohibited on the Common. Loitering in vehicles is not allowed. Any vehicular contaminants leaked such as fuel, motor oil, or hydraulic or transmission fluid, shall be removed at the expense of the owner/operator.

Vehicle Guidelines for Events and Vendors

Vehicles associated with events on the Common will adhere to above stated regulations as well as to the following guidelines:

Set up of events requiring delivery of tents, food, tables, chairs, displays, sculpture and other large objects shall be made by appointment with the Boston Common Administrator. Only essential service vehicles are allowed on the Common.

All delivery vehicles must promptly enter and leave the Common. Deliveries will be made during scheduled times written into the permit. Set up times on weekdays shall not be between the hours of 7 to 9 am and 4 to 6 pm. Weekend times must be arranged in advance with the Boston Common Administrator.

Cause must be shown to the satisfaction of the Parks Department for vehicles which remain during an event. Such vehicles will be listed in the events permit and shall use a vehicular permit and assigned parking space.

Take down will begin only after the bulk of the crowd has left the grounds. The event can be broken down and boxed up but no vehicles may enter the Common to remove the equipment, staging and lighting until one hour after the end of the event or the agreed upon time written in the special events permit, whichever is later. All regulations shall be enforced and reparations or fines shall be imposed for damages and violations.

Media

Press vehicles can be parked in the specially marked area along Beacon Street. Vans necessary for portage of heavy equipment are permitted on the Common for half-hour segments. TV stations wishing longer filming sequences must drop off and pick up camera crews except when a remote unit is required for production. All special arrangements must be submitted to and approved in advance by the Boston Common Administrator.

Police and Emergency Service

Police and emergency vehicles are allowed on the Boston Common on an as needed basis. All vehicles are requested to comply with general Common rules. Police are strongly encouraged to use foot, horse and motorcycle rather than cruiser patrols in the Common.

Park Department Vehicles

All Parks Department vehicles shall be identified as such to make it clear to the general public why they are allowed in the Common. Daily maintenance utilizes the smallest vehicles possible such as Cushman Carts. Four wheel drive pickups are allowable for jobs requiring equipment and materials too extensive to be carried by Cushman Carts. Six wheel drive vehicles are not permitted. Machinery and heavy equipment for specialized maintenance jobs are stored at night in Deer Park Yard. Park Department personnel must examine needs and create as little vehicular disturbance as possible on the Common at all times.

Previous vehicular damage



SAFETY, SECURITY AND ENFORCEMENT

In the early 1980s the Common had substantial use and security problems, and lacked visible police protection. Gambling, drug dealing and other illegal and illicit activities were prevalent. Today a new lighting system is in place and regular police patrols, including horseback, motorcycle and squad cars have been instituted. A greater police presence is recommended particularly after 3:30 pm and a police sweep is suggested at 11:30 pm to enforce park closing. Presence of the Boston Park Rangers and the Common Administrator increases safety and security and shall be continued.

Despite these vast improvements, a perception remains that police protection is inadequate at night. Daytime incidents of panhandling, harassment and drinking remain. An increasing indigent population, that considers the Common a place of refuge, affects perceptions about safety and security, particularly when alcohol and drugs are openly used. Although this is not a new problem nor one which is easily resolved, continued communication and cooperation between the Police Department, Parks Department and social service agencies can provide further improvements.

Park Rangers shall continue to enforce park rules and regulations as well as handle nuisance and quality of life issues. The value of fines for each violation should be increased to \$50, and \$100 for violations involving vehicles. The value of fines shall be reviewed at least every five years. The Rangers have a highly visible presence in the Common and have become its eyes and ears. Enforcement powers to issue tickets would enhance their image and effectiveness and deter unsavory activities.

Regularly scheduled communication between the Police Department and Park Rangers shall continue. Formation of a Park Task Force within the Boston Police Department is encouraged.



Boston Park Ranger

Police Department shifts must provide adequate 24 hour coverage. The use of foot, horse and motorcycle patrols is encouraged.

Police Department recommendations will be followed concerning the installation of emergency call boxes.

A limited number of pay telephones shall be installed at major entries to the Common. A sympathetic design shall be explored.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Ranger Station has acted as a visitor center related to the Common on a seasonal basis. The nearby Visitor Information Center has a city wide and regional role. Plans are underway by the city to incorporate the Visitor Information Center into an expanded and refurbished Ranger Station. Public restrooms will be available at this facility.

The principal role of the Boston Park Ranger Program is to encourage proper park use for the protection of visitors and parks alike. The Rangers stationed at the Common offer daily and special tours focusing on historic and environmental education to expand public enjoyment of downtown parks. They provide park visitors with directions, first aid, assistance with lost children, information about Boston and answers to questions about park use and rules. The Rangers assist in managing events, controlling vehicles and enforcing permits. They present an image of goodwill ambassadors for the Common and the city.

MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The physical components of the Common need attention, improvement and clear long term direction. Management and maintenance of the physical appearance of the Common is of critical importance. With regard to future capital improvement activity, the plan is a guide. It defines a direction for the Common which promotes cohesiveness of purpose and prevents unrelated elements or unwanted intrusions in the park.

This section organizes all physical components of the Common under the following headings:

- Vegetation and Landscape Character
- Pathways
- Furnishings
- Buildings and Structures
- Monuments, Memorials and Plaques
- Central Burying Ground
- Utilities
- Underground Structures

Each section reviews existing conditions and articulates specific maintenance practices to be followed. Where applicable, recommendations for future capital improvements are given.

*The Common from Beacon Hill - 1905
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society - Old State House)*



VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Shade trees and grass have been essential features throughout the history of the Common. Proportions have varied over time, from presettlement forest, to grass with a few trees in the colonial era, to the park landscape of today. The current landscape contains both formal and informal plantings with mature trees. The Common's physical character has evolved, adjusting to each period of changing values regarding the environment around us. Its present character clearly reflects a layering of features and an evolution over time.

The landscape character of the Common, as expressed through vegetation, shall essentially be that which has evolved historically. Open lawns and large deciduous shade trees that contribute a high canopy will predominate. They provide the most significant contribution to both scenic quality and passive recreation.

Overall, the planting must portray a sense of simplicity. The strong shaded green edge of tree lined malls around the perimeter of the Common and along major paths should be reinforced. Clearly defined large open lawn areas should be maintained. The density of trees between paths should be decreased, opening up large lawn areas as older trees decline and are removed. Plantings of drifts of large shade trees should be selectively provided at the edges of large open lawn areas to provide some relief from the sun and the formality of planted allees.

Trees

A major renovation of the Common was planned by the Olmsted firm and executed between 1910 and 1913. It involved extensive soil renewal, preparing large trees for subsequent relocation and repaving paths. The "worn out" soil was removed to a depth of four feet around trees and replenished by the addition of humus, manure, bonemeal and limestone. It can be surmised that the soil was heavily compacted and deficient in nutrients. Following the example of this work, the 1925 Park Department Report noted that trees were set out in large tree pockets or in large continuous foam beds.

Few evergreen trees remain on the Common. Among them, a lone Balsam Fir near Brewer Fountain, surrounded by a white picket fence, is a gift from the City of St. John, New Brunswick. The Fir, given as a symbol of the growing friendship between the two cities, is intended for use as a live children's Christmas tree.

The 1988 inventory and evaluation of the Common's trees by Brian Gilbert revealed that most trees were in good to fair condition. Some 29 in hazardous condition were listed for removal. The report called for the majority to be pruned, fertilized and watered. Priorities for attention were relatively equally distributed between high, moderate and low with the highest priority for trees over 25" dbh (diameter at breast height). The average size of tree on the Common was 20.3" dbh, an indication, overall, of maturity. Problems noted included basal wounding and cable anchors.



Most trees in the Common are physiologically stressed from the urban conditions and can be affected by soil compaction caused by increased public use. Existing trees must be pruned regularly to remove numerous hazards including deadwood, heavy limbs, and extensive trunk and limb cavities. They should also be thinned to improve structural form and health, preventing unhealthy competition and shading out. Cabling should only be provided where a support requirement is necessary. Cables must be removed when they are no longer needed.

The loss of Elms due to Dutch Elm Disease is still a concern. All of the Elms are susceptible and about 8 to 10 trees are lost annually. Over time the overall Elm population may be lost due to age or disease. In the meantime a high degree of vigor must be maintained through available horticultural practices. A higher level nitrogen fertilizer would be more beneficial for American Elms to maintain an optimum health condition. Any pesticides used should have the lowest practical toxicity rating and least environmental impact.

The area north and west of Parkman Bandstand exhibits many problems due to overplanting and specific selection of tree species. The dense overhead canopy has reduced natural lighting causing recently planted trees in the area to exhibit a disfigured form. Grass or ground cover is absent due to chronic soil compaction, lack of light and competition with the surface feeding roots of Norway Maples. The close spacing of Elms has produced tall trees with weak trunks. It has also limited visibility, reducing the feeling of security in this area of the Common.

In 1989 the position of Superintendent of Tree Maintenance was filled by the Parks and Recreation Department, which had been without a tree warden for many years. This stewardship brings renewed strength to the horticultural care and character of the Common.

TREES ON THE COMMON
1851 and 1988

	1851 Quantity	% of Tree Resource	1988 Quantity	% of Tree Resource
SHADE TREES				
American Elm	664	53	15	2
English Elm	49	4	125	17
Other Elm	1	-	150	20
Linden	68	5	167	22
Maple	84	7	41	6
Tuliptree	17	1	3	-
Sycamore	11	1	5	1
Oak	8	1	85	11
Ash	7	1	12	2
Aspen	5	-	-	-
Gingko	1	-	3	-
Pagodatree	-	-	20	3
Other	-	-	18	3
Subtotal	915	73%	644	87%
ORNAMENTAL TREES				
Crabapple	-	-	72	10
Cherry	-	-	26	3
Subtotal	0	0%	98	13%
EVERGREEN TREES				
Fir	250	20	1	-
Spruce	69	5	-	-
Arborvitae	20	2	-	-
Hemlock	1	-	-	-
Cedar	-	-	1	-
Subtotal	340	27%	2	0%
TOTAL	1,255	100%	744	100%

SHADE TREE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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A program for optimum tree care on Boston Common, Public Garden and Commonwealth Avenue Mall.

Pruning and Trimming

A five year cycle with National Arborist Association Standards for Class I (Fine) and Class II (Medium) trees. Some species and the condition of certain trees will require continual care and should be addressed yearly or biannually.

Since January 1988 all shade trees on Public Garden, 90% on Commonwealth Avenue Mall, and 75% on Boston Common have been pruned.

Fertilizing

A five year cycle which lags pruning and trimming by (1) year. It should be curtailed during dry seasons. "Doggets" product will be used due to the salt formulation. Fruit trees will be fertilized with low nitrogen in fall or spring. Shade trees will be fertilized with high nitrogen in spring only. During dry seasons, a water program should be implemented on smaller trees in their first 5 years.

Removal and Emergency Work

Administered entirely by the Parks Department. Removal will be undertaken only when structural integrity or Dutch Elm Disease (DED) is an issue. Emergency Service includes stem damage, Sanitary DED Control, and fallen limbs.

Spraying

Elms on the Common, Public Garden and Commonwealth Avenue will be sprayed once yearly with Methoxychlor 1% to reduce the European and American Bark Beetle populations, which are responsible for the spread of DED.

Injection

Injection of Elms for DED will continue in the same fashion as the 1989 program:

- One injection "Bidrin" and "Fungisol" middle of May
- One injection of "Fungisol" end of July
- One injection of "Arbortect" as needed (when tree shows less than 10% flag, yellowing of tree crown, and sanitary pruning can be accomplished within a day's time of discovery.)

Cabling

Trees with structural deficiencies that can be addressed by cable bracing methods will be identified. Cabling will be introduced over the next 3 years and maintained every year thereafter.

Aeration

Aeration is an ongoing task. The surface aeration achieved during turf management helps but it does not penetrate deeply enough into the soil. Some areas need continued service, others in a 5 year cycle. The time table for one cycle is 5 years and will be undertaken 2 years after fertilizing to re-open soil.

Watering

Water new trees for 2 to 3 years after planting. During the summer months water at least weekly.

Lights

No permanent lights will be affixed to trees. Christmas display lighting must not harm trees, must be fully removed after each year's display, and shall only be hung from healthy trees.

All treatments should be reviewed regularly and revised as needed to incorporate newly recommended treatments and practices.

Shade Tree Planting Program

Tree planting and replacement for the Common will follow the scheme set forth here.

- The tradition of planting large deciduous shade trees will continue on Boston Common.
- Informal groves of trees will remain in selected areas.
- Formal rows or allees of trees will be reinstated along perimeter walks and along paths that traverse the Common, edge to edge.
- Spacing and species selection for tree planting will consider potential increasing shadows and winds from surrounding areas while allowing for adequate light, space for good growth and ultimate height and spread.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The plan emphasizes the need for diversity of trees to provide greater visual and ecological richness, as well as botanical interest. The overall composition must not, however, compete with the botanic nature of the Public Garden. The current high percentage of Elms and Lindens represents a highly vulnerable condition from a pest management point of view. The selection of new trees must be based on their appropriateness to the general restoration of historic effect regarding tree size, shape and the desired high canopy effect. Resistance to the stresses of urban conditions shall be a criterion for selection of species and sizes of trees.

Some of the newer cultivars should be considered. They are often hardier and more disease resistant, with superior form characteristics. In addition, potential water shortages and consequent restrictions make the incorporation of drought resistant trees a consideration in the ongoing improvement of the Common.

Underplanting of existing trees is not advantageous. After several years of dense shade and crowding, underplanted trees are typically malformed, weak and thin. This is evident in many areas of the Common. As old trees are removed, new trees should be planted immediately and placed according to this plan. Memorial trees and other donations must follow the overall planting plan.

New trees must establish root systems quickly and be healthy and large enough to withstand the Common's urban environment. A minimum size shall be 4 inch caliper. Root balls 25% larger than that recommended by the American Association of Nurserymen will speed adaptation. A low nitrogen fertilizer shall be applied in the Fall. Provide a 2 to 3 inch base of mulch. Avoid guy wires.



*Tree Ready to Move - 1911
(Courtesy of National Park Service,
Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site)*

Turf

Shading, soil compaction and poor drainage have contributed to the decline of lawn quality in many areas. Adjacent high-rise development and the random addition of trees has increased the amount of shaded acreage. The proportion of shade to sun affects the character of spaces throughout the park. In open sunny areas turf quality is relatively easily maintained while in heavy shade turf tends to be sparse. In many areas the lawns as well as trees are in poor condition due to compaction caused by both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Erosion remains a concern, particularly on the slope along Park Street.



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TURF MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Early Spring (early to mid April)

- Aerate all areas
- Fertilize with a high N slow release fertilizer such as: 34-3-7
- Overseed where needed with an appropriate seed mix.

Late Spring (late May)

- Aerate all areas
- Water when it becomes necessary

Summer (late June to early July)

- Aerate all areas
- Water when it becomes necessary

Turf Management Program

All fields must be maintained annually and closed to active sports and large events in wet weather and immediately following rain to prevent turf damage. Games other than softball and baseball (such as football and soccer) and use before noon on weekdays shall be prohibited to prevent undue wear. This should be reinforced with appropriate signs. Ball fields and the Parade Ground should be closed each fall for a month to perform turf renovation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, seed rather than sod should be used wherever possible to restore worn, disturbed and eroded areas. This will maintain a finished appearance in this important park. Pre-germinated seed applied in the Fall will provide the best and most rapid results. Issues that cause deterioration of lawns, such as poor drainage, circulation and rodents, should be resolved before seeding occurs. Seed mixes should be tailored to specific sun/shade conditions. In heavily shaded areas, lawns should be seeded with a blend of improved Bluegrass and Fescue. Unless sod has a similar blend, it will provide uneven results in shaded areas primarily because commercial sod is grown in full sun. Sod should only be used when construction scheduling precludes the use of seed. Newly installed lawns must be protected with temporary fencing until they are established.

Fall (mid August to mid September)

- Aerate all areas
- Overseed where needed with an appropriate seed mix.
- Apply limestone to achieve Ph of 6.5
- Fertilize with a high N slow release fertilizer such as: 34-3-7 in areas of turf renovation

Late Fall (early to mid October)

- Aerate any areas needing it
- Apply a fall formula fertilizer such as 15-30-30, low in N, high in P and K to improve root growth and strengthen turf.

All treatments should be reviewed regularly and revised as needed to incorporate newly recommended treatments and practices.

Planting Beds

Planting beds, like flowering trees, are a relatively recent addition. There are now 68 planters around the Common. Seat height planters, filled with ornamental trees and annuals, extend along the length of the wide paved mall near the Tremont Street edge. There are 25 round and 27 rectangular planters. Smaller precast concrete planters line Boylston Street. Flowers beds surround Brewer Fountain. The Parkman Plaza fountain has been filled in to create a knot garden, complete with flowering bedding plants in the summer months.

Departmental horticulture staff propagates, installs and cares for the plants located in these planters and additional beds at Charles Street. Daffodils donated by the Beacon Hill Garden Club have been planted on the bank along Beacon Street.

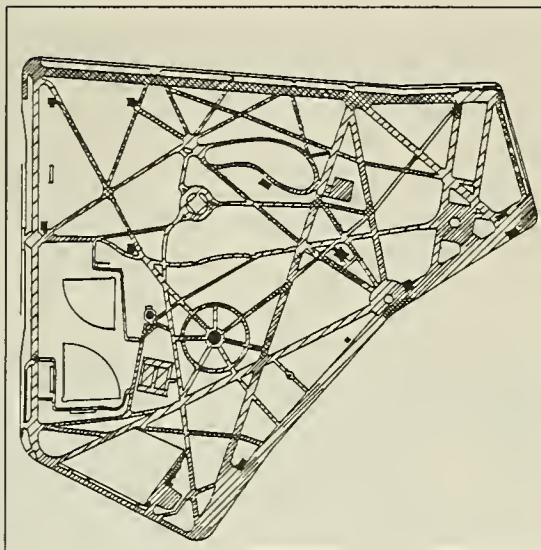
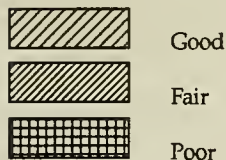
RECOMMENDATIONS

Ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers have not had a place on the Common until recent years. Plantings of this type are incidental, and in some cases antithetical, to the overall character of shade trees and lawns. As a rule they should be restricted to edges and selected monuments. Use of flowers must be limited because they require highly intensive maintenance. The planters along Tremont Street should be replaced with a more suitable planting treatment. The planters along Boylston Street should be removed.



Lafayette Mall - 1989

EXISTING PATHWAY
CONDITIONS PLAN



PATHWAYS

A 1988 use study indicated that the most heavily used walks in the Common are Lafayette Mall, the Mayor's Walk and Railroad Walk. The portion of Lafayette Mall north of the Visitor Center is the most traveled, particularly during rush hour in the evening. Heavy use in a north-south direction includes traffic between Beacon Hill and Park Street station, and secondarily to and from Boylston Street Station, dispersed among a variety of routes.

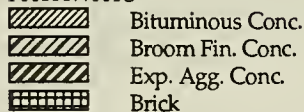
The pathway system progressed to its current state without a unified attitude towards the use of materials. This was noted in a 1925 report and is still evident with the wide range of paving materials found on the Common today.

There are three key issues related to pathways: continuity, carrying capacity and surface drainage. There is a lack of continuity existing in terms of materials and details. An abundant and unrelated variety of both exist. There is some continuity in terms of hierarchy of pathway widths and general layout or distribution of paths, although the latter is overly complex. Carrying capacity pertains to both width and strength of pavement to support vehicular weights. Because the pathway system has evolved over such a prolonged period of time, little is known about the foundation characteristics of many paths.

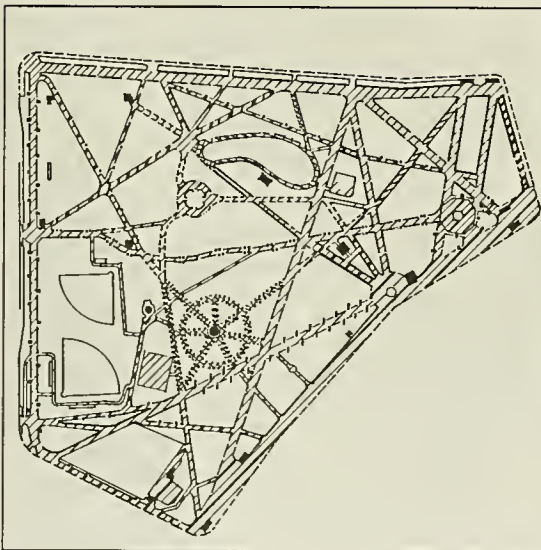
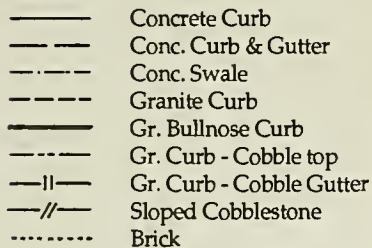
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EXISTING PATHWAY
MATERIALS PLAN

PATHWAYS



EDGES



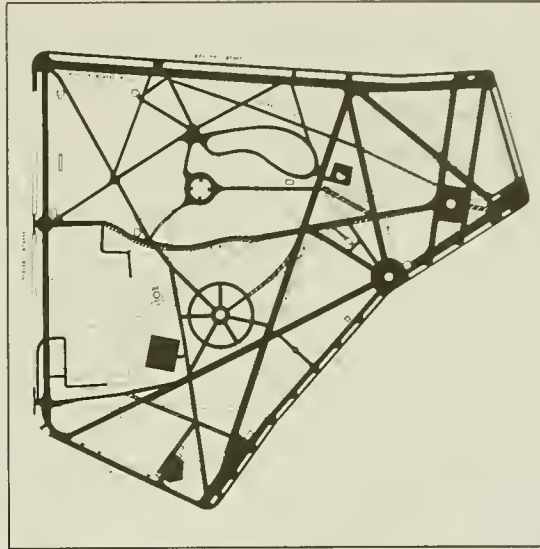
RECOMMENDATIONS

A clear hierarchy of paths should be maintained. In a general sense, walk widths should be based upon their use. Most major paths should be approximately 20 feet wide. Minor paths should be at least 10 feet wide to facilitate vehicular use. The location of paths should be based upon functional, topographic and scenic criteria. Unnecessary and/or redundant walks should be removed to expand green space. Walks across large lawn areas should be minimized. The Park Street Mall has been reduced in width to regrade the adjacent slope, eliminating erosion.

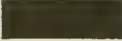

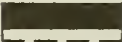


Walks within the Common should have a uniform character and be accessible to all. The inconsistency of treatments should be removed and replaced over time to achieve a harmonious overall system. Many paving materials have a precedent for use in the Common. The goals are to make paths visually recede into the green landscape and consistent with pathway design precedents for the Common. Bituminous concrete paths are recommended. They are durable, easy to maintain and relatively inexpensive to construct.

Perimeter sidewalks should remain concrete for consistency with surrounding urban areas. Pedestrian entrances to the Common along Charles Street should be improved. Obsolete tree wells on the Mayor's Walk which impede pedestrian flow should be removed. Deteriorating walkways, such as those in the Parade Ground area, should be renovated or reconstructed as necessary.

Gutters are important as they prevent surface drainage from crossing paths and causing hazardous conditions in freezing weather. Gutters also assist in controlling water, salt and oil accumulation on paths. While stone cobble gutters could be provided on each side of pathways from a historic perspective, cost considerations preclude this choice. Granite curbing is recommended to contain the flexible bituminous pavement and prevent the unraveling of edges. It will also assist in controlling surface drainage and vehicular movement. In most areas the curbing should be installed with the top flush with the walk surface to prevent creating a tripping hazard. At intersections, particularly those with anticipated vehicular use, the curbing should be raised to provide a barrier.



PROPOSED PATHWAY PLAN

	Path to Remain
	Path to be Removed
	Path to be Narrowed
	Path to be Widened
	New Path



Mayor's Walk - 1939

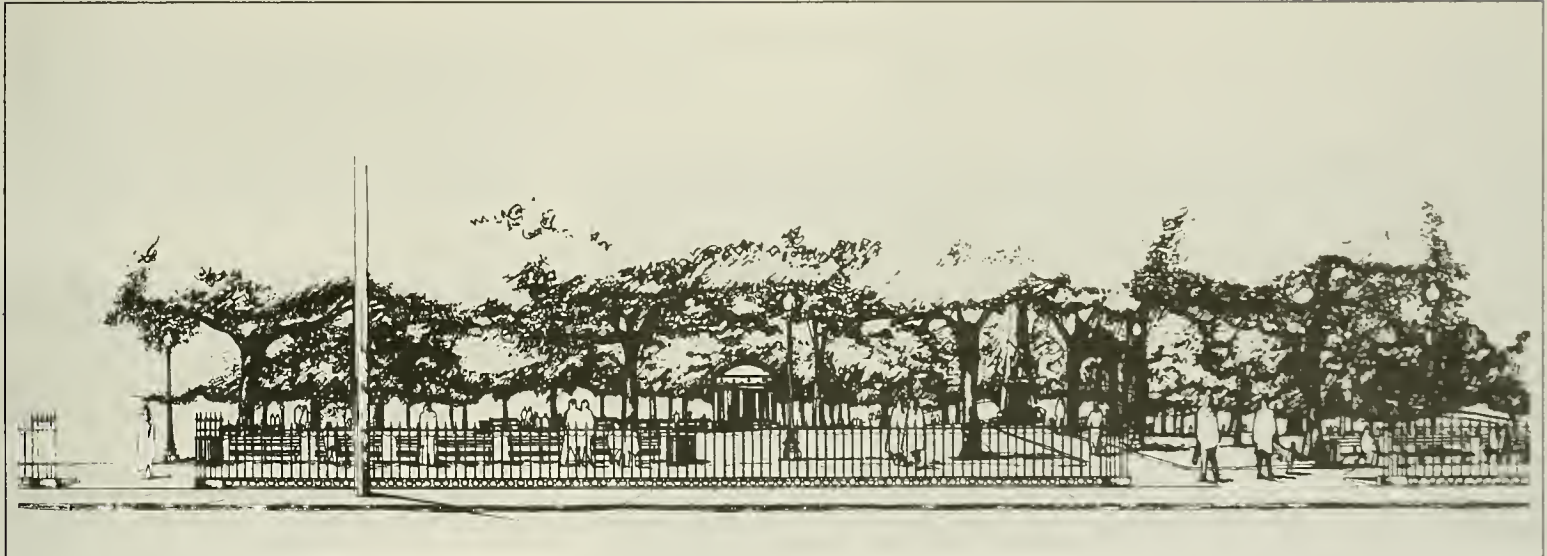


Brimmer Path - circa 1890 (Courtesy The Bostonian Society - Old State House)

All walks in the Common must be wide enough to accommodate smooth pedestrian flow and emergency vehicles. Light loading criteria should be used for paths infrequently driven upon. Heavy loading criteria should be used for those with frequent vehicular use. The latter should also be designed to accommodate turning movements of vehicles.

The Tremont Street edge of the Common needs to be softer and greener. Restoration of lawns along Tremont Street with fencing and gateways, will clarify and formalize this edge. Lawn areas should be broken frequently to allow easy entry and exit. This generally follows the treatment shown in the 1901 plan of the Common. Along Lafayette Mall benches, trash receptacles and signs at entrances (according to the 1986 sign plan) should return the mall to a gracious promenade. An allee of trees, planted in the large setback lawns, should be brought as close to this edge of the Common as the underground subway will allow. Priority should be given to opportunities for improvement that would accompany MBTA or other projects which will affect the Tremont Street area.

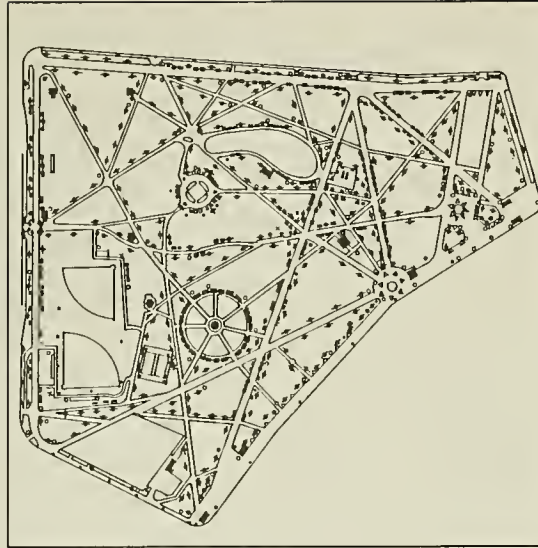
Lafayette Mall consists of three plazas, with one at each end and one in the middle. In addition, two stretches of mall link these three plazas together, from Park Street Station to Parkman Plaza and from there to Boylston Street Station. Heavy pedestrian use of Park Street Station and Boylston Street Station, requires that these areas be primarily paved. Special paving patterns should be considered to provide visual interest and relief in these large paved areas. Both the plaza and mall sections should be constructed of materials compatible with those of the interior path system.



Proposed Lafayette Mall

EXISTING FURNISHINGS PLAN

- Wood/Conc. Bench on Paving
- Wood/Conc. Bench on Lawn
- △ Wood/Metal Victorian Bench
- Stone Bench
- Metal Trash Cont./Plastic Insert
- ⊙ Metal Trash Cont./Metal Insert
- ⊕ Concrete Trash Container
- × Drinking Fountain
- Pedestrian Light
- Other Light



FURNISHINGS

The supply of suitable furnishings must be adequate to accommodate park users. New park accessories such as fences, gates, benches, trash receptacles, lights, drinking fountains and signs should complement the historic character of the space, relate to one another and incorporate durable, vandal resistant materials and construction. Besides addressing functional and aesthetic concerns, cost, continuity and supply are key issues related to furnishings. There is an established continuity in the use of black metal furnishings such as fencing, trash receptacles, lights and signs. The use of benches with dark green painted wood and concrete supports is in keeping with park traditions in the Common and the city in general.

Fencing

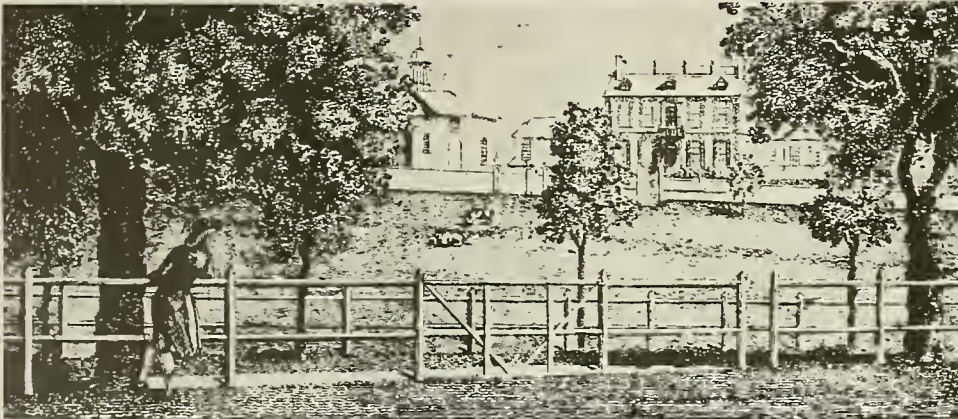
The Common has had some form of fenced edge for over 250 years. More than 40% of the Common, which has a perimeter that is slightly longer than a mile, retains its fence edge today, excluding chain link fencing around the ball fields.

Benches

There are 390 benches on the Common today. The most prevalent type, 74%, has concrete supports and wood slats. Reproduction Victorian period benches account for 17% and stone benches make up the remaining 9%. A slight majority (55%) of benches, particularly the wood and concrete type, are set in grass. The remainder have a paved surface beneath.

Additional seating has been provided since the 1950s in the form of seat walls in various locations and seat height planters along Tremont Street. They are typically faced with brick and capped with bluestone.

*Fence along the edge of the Common
- 18th century
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*



Trash Receptacles

Some years ago, trash receptacles on the Common took the form of concrete tree trunks and trash was simply burned in them. Four types of trash receptacles are used on the Common today. Three of these types are fixed in place, representing 172 receptacles, about half of those seen on the Common. The rest are painted 55 gallon drums. These are used to supplement fixed receptacles and to assist during periods of anticipated heavy use.

The most common receptacle, 151 or 88%, has black steel frames with removable, plastic inserts. The insert is typically black and subject to fire damage. There are 18 similar, more sturdy but older, receptacles with 30 gallon removable steel inserts in black steel frames. The latter type is prevalent in the Public Garden. Some of each of these steel frame types has bent frames and/or missing inserts. Two precast concrete cylinders can be found near the Soldiers and Sailors Monument and another near the central Charles Street entrance. Plastic bags of various colors are used inside most containers to facilitate emptying.

Drinking Fountains

There are four nonfunctioning drinking fountains on the Common. All have flow control mechanisms except the oldest, a granite structure at the corner of Charles and Boylston Streets. The granite fountains should be maintained. An old precast fountain is located near the Frog Pond and two contemporary precast fountains serve the ball fields.

Display Fountains

Currently there are two display fountains. The Brewer and the Cochituate fountain in the Frog Pond are both operable. The water display effects of these fountains should remain. A third fountain, the Parkman Plaza Fountain, is not usable due to both mechanical and wind problems and has been temporarily covered over with a knot garden.

Telephones

Telephones are located near the entrances to the Park and Boylston Street Stations, and at the corner of Charles and Boylston streets on the Common.

Flagpole

A monumental flagpole, shaped from a single tree trunk, commands the high ground south of the Mayor's Walk and just east of the ball fields. Structural analysis reveals rotting at its base.

Lighting

New pedestrian lighting was installed in 1987. Major paths have lights on one or both sides near the path edge. Secondary paths have lights alternately interspersed with trees on one side of the path. Minor paths have alternate trees and lamps on both sides of walks. The 243 new lights were installed, spaced approximately 70 feet apart. The relationship between the edge of pathways and light posts varies from essentially abutting the edge of a pathway to an approximate 8 foot 6 inch clearance. Boston Park Posts and Acorn fixtures were used, as in the Public Garden and as recommended in the 1972 Common and Garden master plan. They reinforce the historic and architectural character of the Common.

Signs

A Common sign program was prepared and phases of it were implemented in 1987 and 1990. Some non-conforming signs still exist however. Updated orientation and interpretive signs are still needed.



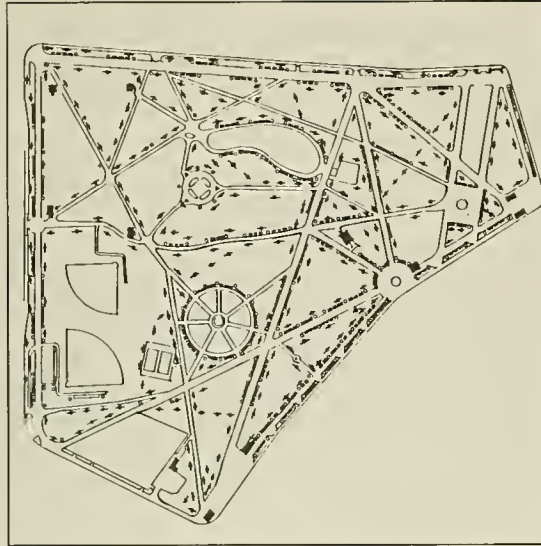
Perimeter fence - 1989

Reproduction Victorian period bench - 1989



PROPOSED FURNISHINGS PLAN

- Wood/Conc. Bench on Paving
- ▣ Wood/Conc. Bench on Lawn
- △ Wood/Metal Victorian Bench
- Stone Bench
- Metal Trash Cont./Plastic Insert
- ⊙ Metal Trash Cont./Metal Insert
- ⊕ Concrete Trash Container
- × Drinking Fountain
- Pedestrian Light
- Other Light



RECOMMENDATIONS

Fencing

The now missing perimeter fencing and gateways should be reconstructed to formalize pedestrian access and egress points. It will provide a greater sense that one is walking within a green space and assist in controlling vehicular access. The fence along the edge of the Common serves a practical function as well as contributing to the overall historic character. The need for this control is critical to protect the valuable resource of the Common which is subject to unconscious damage by an increasing number of users. New fencing and gateways must respect the integrity of the existing remaining fence. A review of the various gateways that have been part of the Common will help to understand precedent for future gateway improvements. They further offer an opportunity for memorial art as is evident in several of the existing gateways.

The existing fence is in generally good condition. However, many of the granite foundations for the fence are cracked. All existing fencing should be cleaned and painted. The iron work at the Charles Street Gate needs restoration. The ball field fences and appurtenances should be painted black to blend in with the background of the park.

Low post and chain fences are found around lawns in various locations in the Common. The low barriers discourage people from walking on the grass in intensely used areas. These barriers should be continued where necessary. Bent or crooked posts should be straightened or replaced. Chain and related appurtenances should be repaired as required.

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Benches on a slope - 1989

Benches

The quantity of benches on the Common could be increased, although many people enjoy sitting on lawns. In addition to consistency in design and color, the benches should be refined in terms of detail and installation methods, such as surface materials beneath benches and footing details. The area beneath benches should be paved to reduce maintenance requirements. The horizontal alignment of benches should be consistent. All benches along a sloping path should be set with the bench parallel with the grade. In the interim existing benches should be repaired by straightening misaligned supports, replacing missing slats and painting. In general, the use of seat walls including large granite blocks should be discontinued. Existing elements of this type should be removed.

Trash Receptacles

A single type of trash receptacle should be used on the Common. It should be simple, functional and relatively unobtrusive. It should also be large enough to keep servicing requirements to a minimum. Black painted metal works well with other existing furnishings. Nonconforming receptacles should be replaced. Trash bag liners should be black or a single dark color. Painted 55 gallon drum containers should continue to be used in conjunction with special events and removed after the events.

Drinking Fountains

Existing drinking fountains should be made functional. Mechanisms to control water flow must be considered mandatory. Adequate paving and drainage should be provided around them. New drinking fountains should be added that are accessible to all.

Display Fountains

All display fountains must be modified to accommodate recirculating systems mandated by the state and to conceal the unsightly appearance of exposed plumbing appurtenances when there is no water display. Brewer Fountain has been renovated (1990) and a recirculating pump has been installed. The water display of the Parkman Plaza Fountain should be redesigned to accommodate existing wind conditions or removed.



Telephones

A limited number of telephones should be added at the corner of Charles and Beacon Streets on the Common. It is desirable to replace the Common phones with a more compatible design. The Police Department will be consulted regarding the possible addition of emergency call boxes.

Flagpole

The flagpole is a contributing aesthetic and historic element. Two alternatives are suggested, either of which would retain this feature in spirit. One is to saw off the lower rotted portion of the pole and reset the remaining pole in place. The second is replacement of the existing pole with a new wood or fiberglass pole. Due to the current structural weakness no flag should fly on the pole until it is repaired or replaced as a strong wind could potentially catch the flag and bring down the pole. After repair or replacement a suitably sized flag should be installed as should lighting for night display.

Lighting

The new pedestrian lighting system has dramatically improved the sense of security on pathways and must be maintained.

An extensive lighting display is provided during the Christmas holidays by lighting up to 50 trees on the Common. This dramatic event is highly intensive in terms of labor requirements. It can be detrimental to the trees if branches are broken and limb girdling cables are left in place. The seasonal lighting of trees must be managed to avoid vegetative damage. Permanent lights must not be installed in trees.

Special lighting should be considered for the illumination of important monuments like Brewer Fountain and the Parkman Bandstand. Consideration should be given to using monuments, memorials, buildings and/or some activity areas, such as the Frog Pond, for seasonal lighting displays.

Signs

The 1987 Common and Garden sign program outlines four categories of proposed signs: identification, regulation, orientation and interpretation. The Boston Common sign program should be completed, including orientation and interpretive elements at all five corner entrances. However, further study of the specific details of the system is recommended to achieve a highly legible but restrained effect and one consistent within the larger context of the Management Plan. Nonconforming existing signs should be removed. Old bent and illegible identification tags on trees should be removed and replaced and new trees should be tagged.





View down mall along Charles Street from Beacon Street - 1907, Courtesy of National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATHWAYS, FURNISHINGS AND VEGETATION

Perhaps the most delightful and successful existing pathways are portions of Oliver Wendell Holmes Mall and Lyman Path. They offer the most complete overall effect of allees (a general term for long straight paths lined with rows of regularly spaced shade trees) complemented with benches and trash receptacles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Relationship of Trees to Paths - Allees

The allees should be restored, particularly along pathways that cross from one edge of the Common to the other. The desire is to achieve a formality and density of vegetation when seen in perspective along a pathway. Because there is a concern about too much shade along paths, the trees should be spaced far enough apart to facilitate a quality of dappled light.

Each allee should be composed of a single species for continuity along a walk. Pivotal trees at intersections of two or more paths should be the species of the predominant pathway.

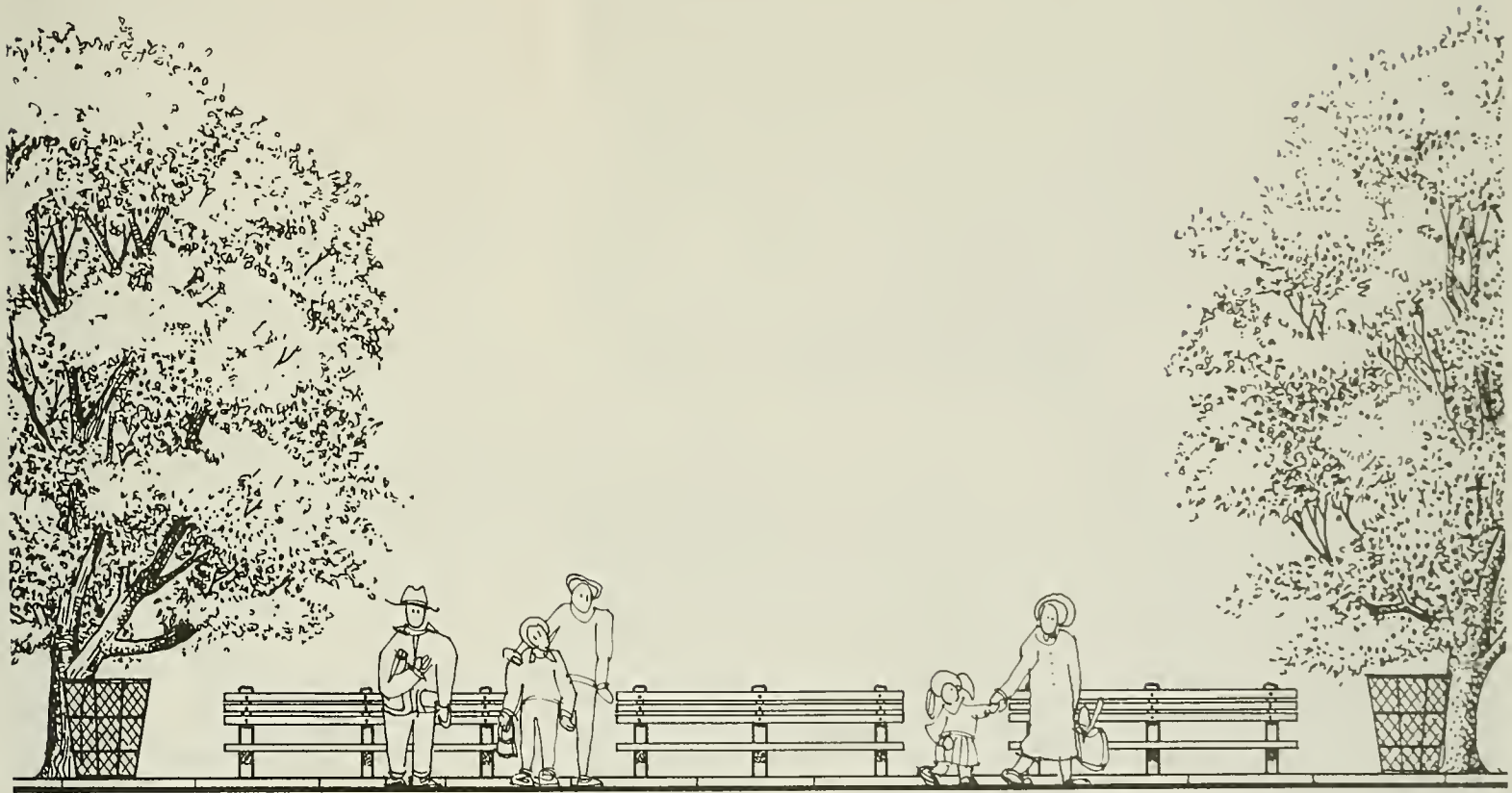
-50-



Section through typical pathway

In restoring the allees, the desired effect of design objectives must be balanced with horticultural needs and desires. A reasonable spacing will allow tree crowns to touch or overlap when trees reach maturity. The actual spacing must take into account the characteristics of specific tree species to be used. Scale relationship, height of canopy, light quality, desired tree form, habit of growth or branch structure, and spread of branches and roots all need to be considered in determining the spacing or distance between trees.

Red Oak, Red Maple and London Planetree are good examples of trees for allees in the Common. Many others are of course acceptable. All are generally rounded to broad rounded in form with moderate to dense foliage. These trees should be typically planted 36 to 40 feet apart with square spacing and with the path centered between the trees. This spacing will assure a consistency of pattern of light and shade, regardless of pathway width. The form and density of various species may require some adjustment to spacing for allees.



Elevation along typical pathway

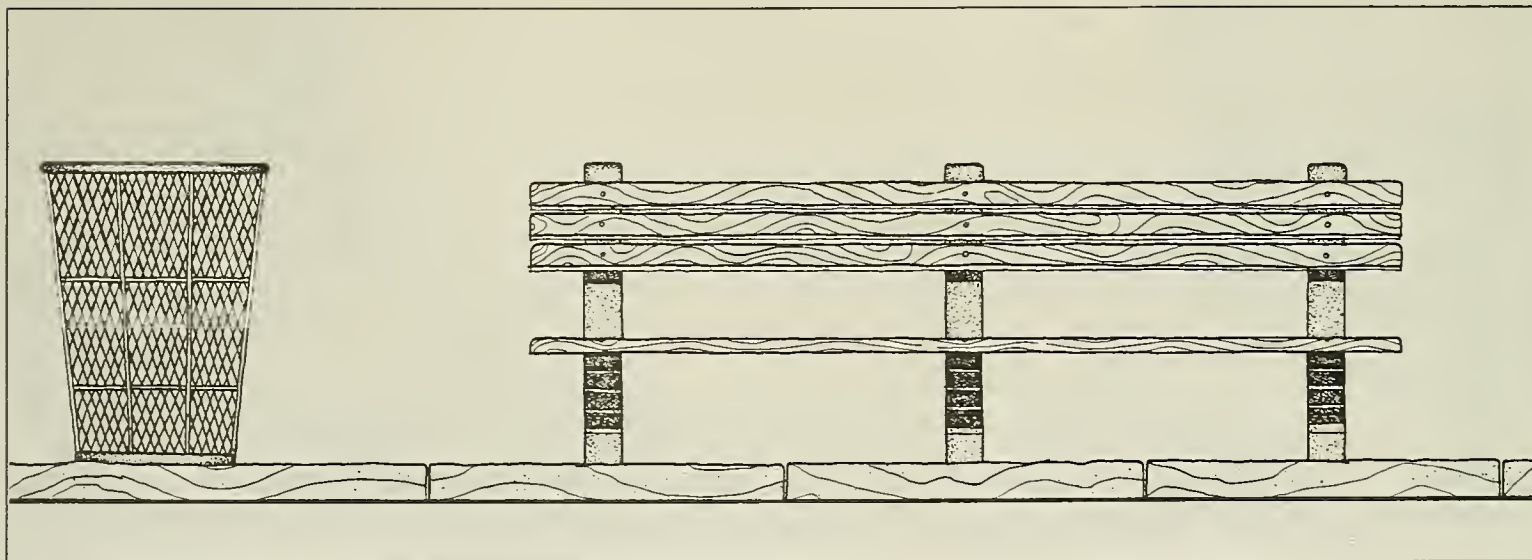
Relationship of Furnishings to Each Other

Benches should be grouped in a linear fashion along pathways. This will provide a sense of rhythm and unity as one walks along a path. They can be placed on one side of a path, on opposite sides or staggered along a path depending upon location. Typical groupings should consist of 3 to 5 benches in a row with trash receptacles at each end. With a standard bench length of 8 feet and 3 feet between benches, the groupings will be either 39 or 61 feet in overall length including trash receptacles. Trash receptacles should be fixed in place to maintain their relationship to the rest of the grouping.

Relationship of Furnishings to Paths

Benches should be placed immediately adjacent to pathways and the surface beneath the benches and trash receptacles should be paved to reduce maintenance requirements. Bench supports should be placed flush with the path edging. This will allow the feet of a person sitting on a bench to extend beyond the drainage course of a gutter, should it be placed immediately below a bench.

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Detail Elevation of Bench and Trash Receptacle

RECREATION FACILITIES

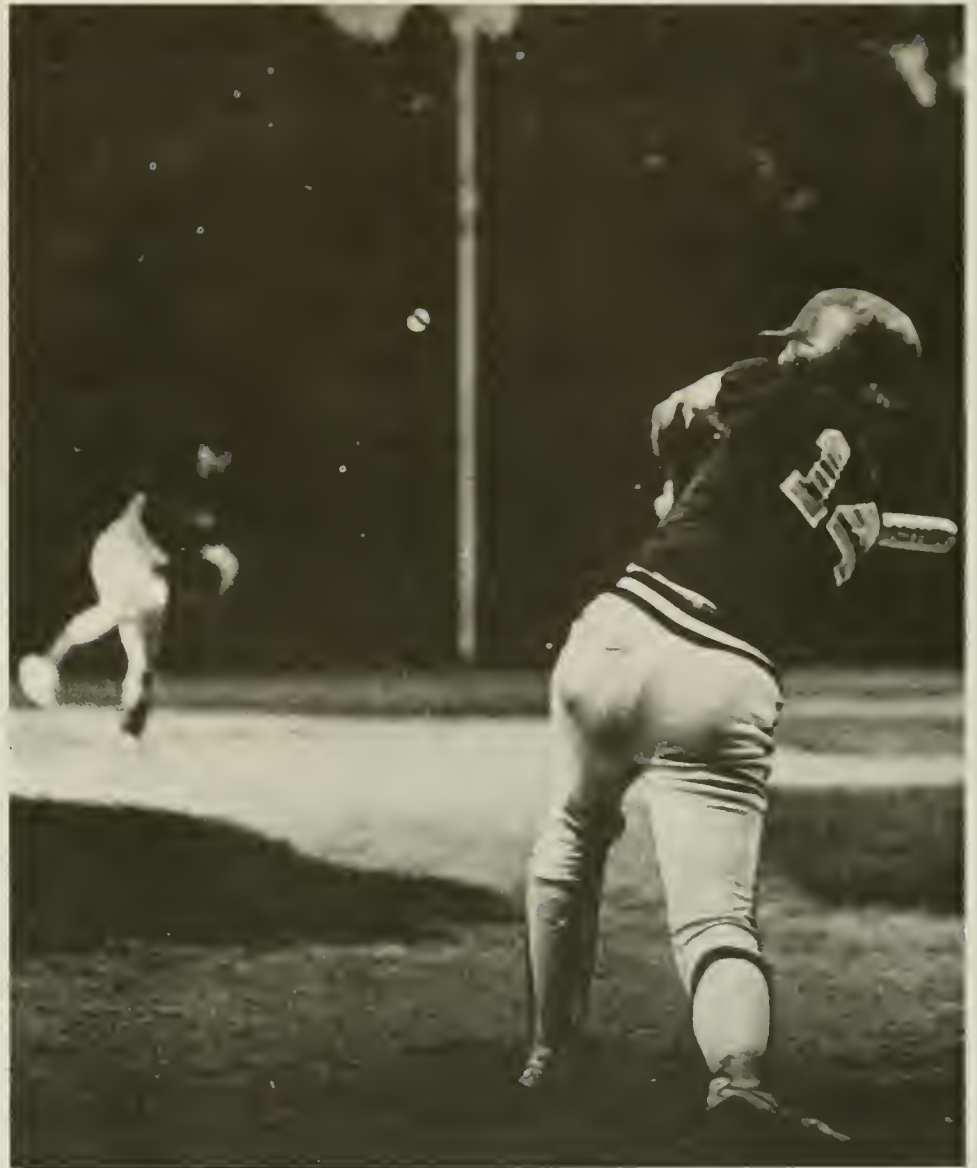
While the Common is primarily passive in nature, it does contain some designated active use recreation facilities. The ball fields, tennis courts and playground have made the Common similar in nature to many other parks. They provide needed facilities for adjacent neighborhoods that have few recreational choices available and they furnish spectator events.

There are two ball fields located adjacent to Charles Street. Both are enclosed by a chain link fence and have backstops, bleachers and scoreboards. One field is lighted for night use. The fenced fields cover over 6% of the Common. There is a concern about the amount of area of this precious land being designated for a single use, available to relatively few people at a time. Together, designated single use areas take up almost 11% of the land area of the Common. There is a mistaken perception that the ball fields are used primarily by adults. In fact, heavy regular use is scheduled by Boston's schools and the Boston Youth League. Management problems associated with these fields include parking on the lawn, illegal drinking and trash.

Two lighted tennis courts, enclosed by chain link fencing, are located near the ball fields. Concerns about designation for the exclusive use of a few at a time are similar to those of the ball fields. Chinatown and Bay Village residents have voiced a need for these courts, which are heavily used by a broad spectrum of Boston residents.

The children's play area, east of the Frog Pond, is heavily used by day care groups and on weekends. It is surrounded by a metal picket fence. Benches are provided for parents.

The Frog Pond offers summer fun for children as a spray and wading pool. Weather permitting, ice skating may be provided during winter months. During the spring and fall it is currently an empty concrete shell. When the Frog Pond is filled in the summer, it is drained the same day according to health regulations for wading pools.



A baseball game on the Common

The Frog Pond - 1989



*The Frog Pond as a Still Pool - 1913
(Courtesy of National Park Service,
Frederick Law Olmsted
National Historic Site)*



RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing sports facilities should be maintained. The tennis courts shall be maintained as long as they serve a need that cannot be accommodated in another suitable location. However, they could be removed from the Common and relocated to another nearby park if feasible at a future date. The area could then be opened up to expand passive recreation uses and provide re-greening opportunities. The expansion of sports facilities on the Common shall be prohibited.

Replacement equipment in the play area has been installed (1990) to provide increased safety and greater play value.

The Frog Pond must be one of the Common's most important and attractive year round features. It shall remain a fountain and wading pool in summer, become a shallow reflecting pool during spring and fall as it once was, and be used for ice skating in winter. It must be completely reconstructed, removing the concrete container with its no longer functioning freon refrigeration system and replacing the containment so the bottom is of a uniform depth. Further investigation of the feasibility of recycling this water for irrigation of lawns and trees is recommended. The adjacent brick paving which is in poor condition should be removed and replaced with either the bituminous paving recommended for the Common or with brick. Stone edging should be removed, reset and repointed. Nearby granite seat walls should be removed in favor of benches consistent with the predominant type in the Common.

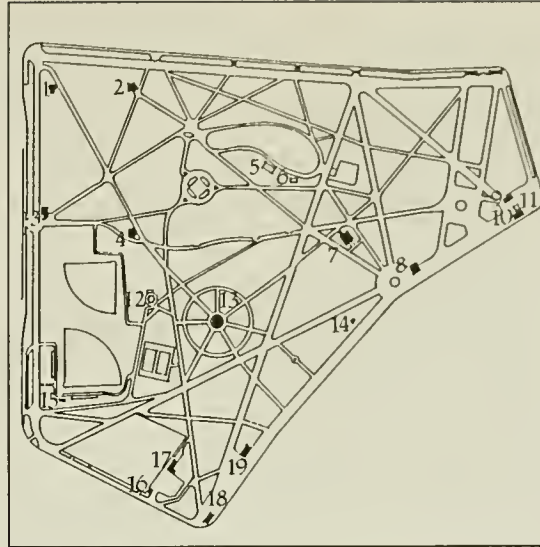
BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Today there are 19 "permanent" buildings and structures, only 8 of which are directly related to park activities. Most significant as contributors to the character of the Common and also important to the park functions today are the Deer Park Maintenance Building, Ranger Station (the former Women's Comfort Station) and Parkman Bandstand. Parkman Bandstand is a highly visible structure with increasing use. While not significant architecturally, the masonry building at the south end of the ball fields houses field lighting controls.

The Ranger Station will be adapted to incorporate the Visitor Information Center (1991-2) and public restrooms along with its current program as the Ranger headquarters and the Office of the Common Administrator. The Deer Park Maintenance Yard has been reduced in size by approximately 20% to return grass to the Common. The Deer Park Building has been repaired (1990).

Other buildings and structures on the Common that are functionally important are not park related. There are four granite headhouses built in 1897 to serve Park and Boylston Street Stations which are also architecturally significant. The parking garage, built circa 1961, has four brick and glass exit kiosks on the Common.

Smaller structures include two granite air vents for the subway system, one near Parkman Plaza and another at the Deer Park Maintenance Yard. A "temporary" wood structure for the sale of subway tokens has been placed near Park Street Station.



PLAN OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

- 1 Garage Exit Kiosk
- 2 Garage Exit Kiosk
- 3 Garage Exit Kiosk
- 4 Garage Exit Kiosk
- 5 Wood Shed
- 6 Wood Shed
- 7 Ranger Station
- 8 Visitor Center
- 9 MBTA Headhouse
- 10 MBTA Headhouse
- 11 MBTA Wood Ticket Booth
- 12 Men's Comfort Station
- 13 Parkman Bandstand
- 14 MBTA Air Vent
- 15 Storage Building
- 16 MBTA Air Vent
- 17 Deer Park Maintenance Building
- 18 MBTA Headhouse
- 19 MBTA Headhouse

- Building to Remain
 □ Building to be Removed



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Men's Comfort Station - 1988

RECOMMENDATIONS

No additional buildings should be added to the Common. Unnecessary structures should be removed unless they can be adaptively reused and they contribute to the character of the Common. This includes the two sheds near the Frog Pond, the Men's Comfort Station as well as the ticket booth near Park Street Station.

Existing structures to remain that detract from the character of the Common, should be redesigned or replaced. The underground garage kiosks should be redesigned such that they are compatible with the character of the Common and respect park traditions for architecture. This must be made a priority part of any renovation of the garage facilities.

The entire surrounding area of Parkman Bandstand should be renovated and the bandstand restored and fully utilized. The brick paving in its circular form with the internal spokes should be retained and renovated. All other brick paving should be replaced when necessary with the standard paving for the Common. Additional benches should be considered to facilitate use of the area for performances.

Relative Heights of Various Buildings on the Common



MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND PLAQUES

During the mid 1800s to the early 1900s, embellishments such as the Brewer Fountain were given as gifts to the Common. New additions, specifically major monuments and memorials, were added each decade until WWI. After that new works appeared with intervals of several decades. Later small scale stone markers began to flourish which tend to be more akin to cemetery markers in design.

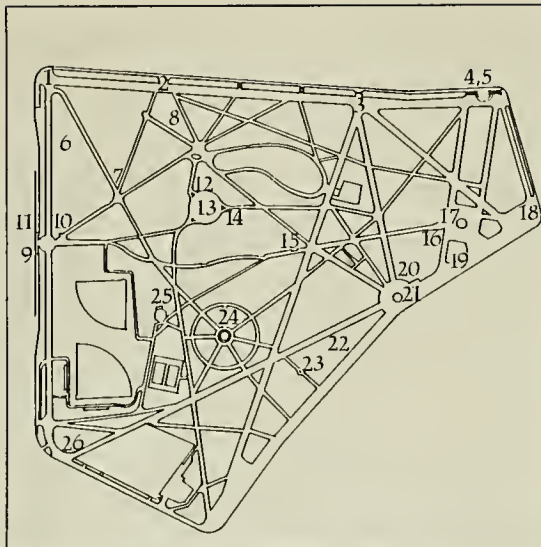
The Common has been the site of at least 26 recorded works of art, monuments, memorials, and/or plaques as well as a commemorative planting on top of Monument Hill. There are eight major works on the Common. Some such as the Shaw/54th and the Founders Memorial have been recently restored. The Shaw/54th Memorial now has a permanent endowment fund for continual care. The Boston Massacre Memorial has been stabilized. Others have been targets of graffiti and are in need of restoration such as the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Many commemorate significant events, causes or associations but are not significant works of art in themselves. The Boston Art Commission has helped to restore 8 of the existing monuments on the Common.



*Shaw Memorial - 1897
(Courtesy of The Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*

PLAN OF EXISTING MONUMENTS
MEMORIALS AND PLAQUES

- 1 Charles Street Gate
- 2 Founders Memorial
- 3 Curtis Guild Memorial Steps
- 4 Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th
Massachusetts Regiment
Memorial
- 5 WWI Memorial Steps
- 6 The Partisans
- 7 Carty Parade Ground Tablet
- 8 Oneida Football Tablet
- 9 Fox Hill Plaque
- 10 Papal Mass Tablet
- 11 Royal Navy Plaque
- 12 Nurses Plaque
- 13 Soldiers and Sailors Monument
- 14 WWI Mine
- 15 Great Elm Plaque
- 16 Pedestrian Lighting Plaque
- 17 Brewer Fountain
- 18 Boston Common Tablet
- 19 Marquis de Lafayette Plaque
- 20 Commodore Barry Memorial
- 21 Parkman Plaza
- 22 Declaration of Independence
Memorial
- 23 Boston Massacre Memorial
- 24 Parkman Memorial Bandstand
- 25 The Flagstaff
- 26 Edward Filene Memorial



RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing monuments, memorials and plaques belonging to the city must be carefully preserved. Restoration efforts should maintain the integrity of original materials and design. Restoration should include a thorough study of each work including foundations, connections and fastenings to insure structural adequacy. The effects of vandalism and the environment must be considered in restoration work. Only skilled conservators should perform this work. Graffiti must be properly and promptly removed by methods approved in advance by the Boston Art Commission and administered by either the Parks Department maintenance division or a conservator.

There must be a moratorium on additional art works and memorials for the Common until a policy regarding such works is in place. Adoption of the May 1988 Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government guidelines for a restricted growth policy for new memorials on the Common is recommended with minor amendments. This should encourage the prudent use of the Common's precious space by placing any new memorials in locations where they do not detract from the landscape as a whole and where they contribute to the appearance of the Common. The proposed guidelines are:

A time lag of at least seven years between the occurrence of an event to be commemorated, or the death of a person to be commemorated, and the acceptance of applications for memorials to this event or person. This would not apply to memorial furnishings such as trees, benches and gateways that fit within the overall plan for the Common.

Soldiers and Sailors Monument

No approval of new memorials unless the events or individuals commemorated are significant and compelling, can be closely related to or associated with the City of Boston, and the memorial has compelling reasons to be erected in the Common rather than in another location in the City.

No approval of new art works or memorials unless provisions are made for the continued maintenance of at least the memorial itself and any changes made to the Common to facilitate public enjoyment of the memorial.

No new large memorials should be placed in the interior of the Common.

Art works and memorials approved for the Common should be of a nature that will not compete with or detract from the existing traditional pieces. Considerations include location, size, material, texture, color and form of expression.

Adoption of all artwork on the Common for restoration and maintenance is encouraged under the city's Adopt-A-Statue program.

The display of temporary art on the Common should be encouraged, but limited to a maximum exhibit period of 90 days. Temporary art displays should be confined to existing paved areas to prevent damage to fragile green areas. The corner of Boylston and Tremont streets is considered a prime location for temporary art due to its location abutting the Midtown Cultural District.



Boston Massacre Memorial

CENTRAL BURYING GROUND

A master plan was completed in 1986 for the 16 historic burying grounds of the city including Central Burying Ground. British soldiers killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill were buried here along with patriots who opposed them. The character of the area is primarily that of lawn and large shade trees along with headstones and a large freestanding mound tomb. It is surrounded by an iron fence on a concrete base. Conservation of many headstones was completed in the spring of 1990. Today the granite retaining wall of the mound tombs, built in 1836, is being temporarily braced while significant funds are sought for rehabilitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The remaining recommendations of the Historic Burying Grounds Master Plan shall be carried out. This includes conservation of small tomb memorials as well as reconstruction of the mound tomb. It also includes care of vegetation and replacement of trees as necessary. Species for replacement and supplemental planting shall be consistent with those in the Common. In addition, the Boylston Street entrance should be closed and the gate relocated to the Common side of the burying ground. Central Burying Ground shall remain without a paved path system.

UTILITIES

The Common contains a maze of underground utilities. While most of these utilities serve the park, many are placed there because the Common has offered the path of least resistance for major utility lines serving nearby areas. All of these lines affect the potential location of trees and other park elements. The pedestrian lighting system and electrical system were upgraded significantly in 1987, and are deemed adequate for the foreseeable future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 1991 Utility Plan for the Common by Storch Associates analyzed existing storm drainage and water supply systems and outlined recommendations.

The amount of impermeable surface area shall be reduced wherever possible to decrease the amount of surface runoff. This will benefit green areas and reduce requirements on the existing storm system. Specific areas shall be regraded to prevent standing water. Typical details for storm drainage structures shall be utilized for efficient maintenance and repair. The storm drainage system shall be cleaned regularly. The overall system shall be designed for peak conditions.

An adequate supply of water is a critical component in establishing and maintaining healthy turf and trees. Additional hose bibbs and a greater capacity of water are needed. An underground water supply system for irrigation will be considered, at least for certain areas. The system should consist of flush lawn hydrants with a maximum spacing of 200 feet. Supply lines should be at least 2-1/2 inches with appropriate pressure. Consideration should also be given to recycling water from the Frog Pond for watering purposes.

Central Burying Ground



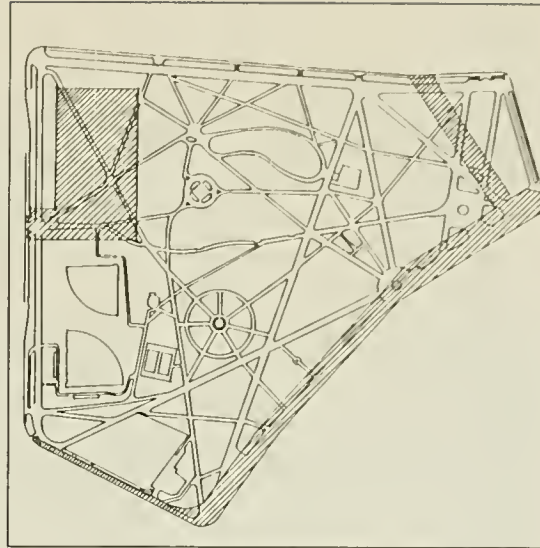
UNDERGROUND STRUCTURES

Underground structures such as the subway and parking garage have significantly and permanently affected the above ground horticultural character of the Common. Shallow soil depths (averaging 2 feet over the subway and 4 feet at the garage) limit possibilities for planting trees and create difficulties in maintaining turf. Today almost 17% of the land area of the Common has structures beneath it. The parking garage and the subway have waterproofing problems. Both are undergoing analysis and are scheduled for major repairs.


RECOMMENDATIONS

The addition or expansion of underground structures should be prohibited. Any below grade construction for existing facilities must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be designed to allow reasonable root penetration, retention of adequate moisture in the soil, free drainage, a good growing medium and normal freeze-thaw cycles in the root zone.

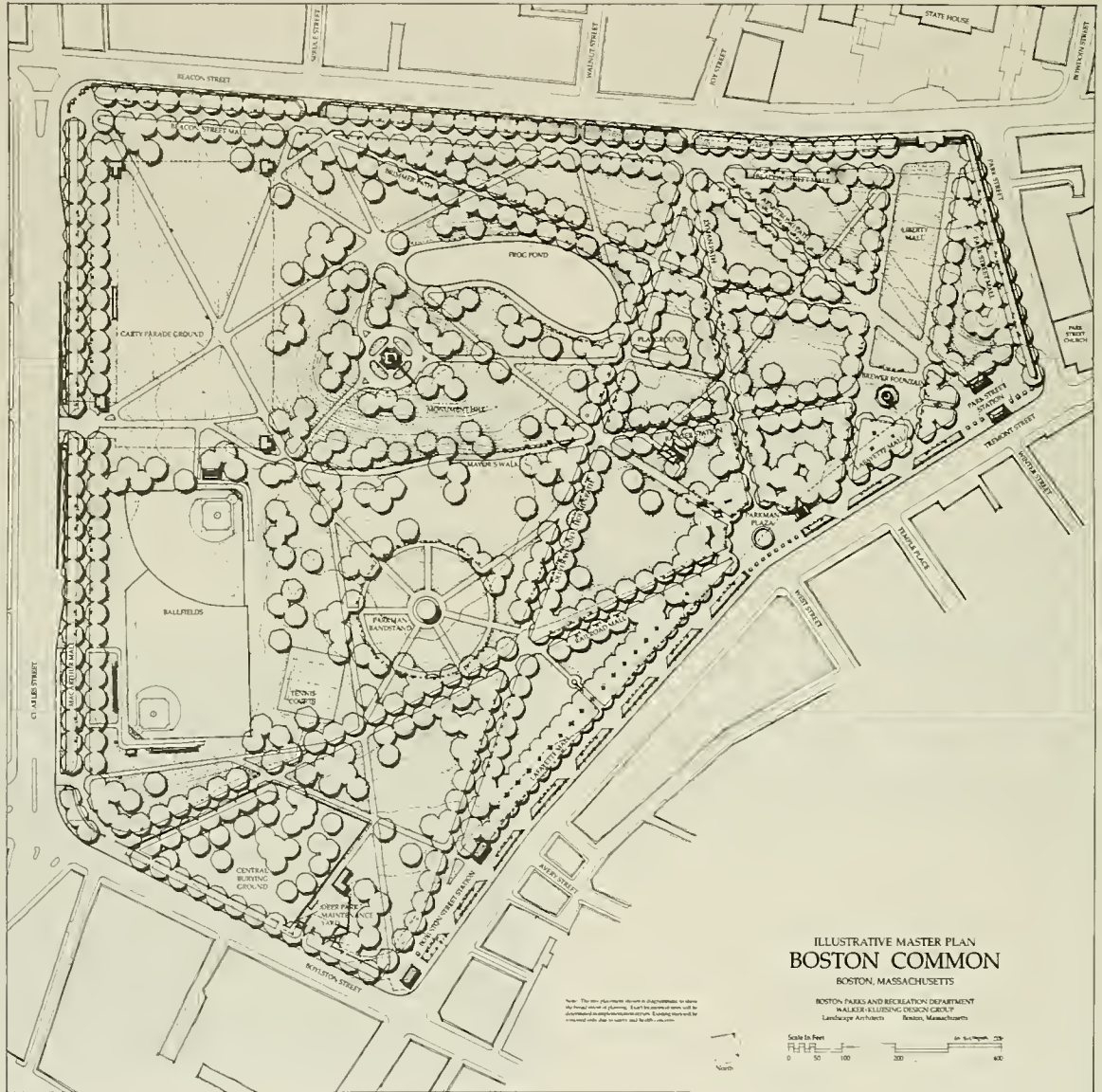
New or enlarged above grade features such as head houses and vents for below grade elements should be avoided. When necessary, they must also be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be designed to reduce safety and security impacts on the Common and to be visually compatible with the character of the Common.



UNDERGROUND STRUCTURES

 Underground Structures

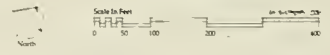
ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN



ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN
 BOSTON COMMON
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
 WALKER-KILUSING DESIGN GROUP
 LandScape Architecture Boston, Massachusetts

Note: The site plan shows a general outline of the site and is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is not intended to be used as a legal document. Existing sites will be removed only after an appropriate legal process.



COST ESTIMATES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The task of bringing Boston Common to optimum condition will occur in two ways. First, through the upgrading of maintenance operations requiring annual expenditure and secondly, through a series of capital improvement projects involving one time costs. The Parks and Recreation Department, as administrator of the Common, will lead this effort. The department will exercise its role of leadership among the public agencies and authorities with overlapping jurisdictions in the Common.

This section includes criteria for establishing capital improvement project priorities. It also sets forth how programs may be enhanced to accomplish the goals established throughout the plan. These goals for operating programs and capital improvements are shared by both the public and private sector. The resources which have funded Boston Common in the past generation are documented as well. They will serve as a baseline as we mount the campaign to implement this plan.

Criteria for Establishing Project Priorities

1. **General Importance:** Is the project of high, medium or low importance?
 - a. Aesthetically (scenic qualities and degree of visibility).
 - b. Historically (significance in the park, city, state, region or nation).
 - c. Functionally (safety and security; public degree of use and appreciation; role in maintaining or improving the Common's functioning abilities).
2. **Public Demand:** Does the project meet public demand and approvals.
3. **Location:** Will the project:
 - a. Experience a high level of use or is it near high-density neighborhoods?
 - b. Benefit areas beyond project boundaries inside or outside the Common?
 - c. Fit into the plan for a larger area of the park?
 - d. When implemented, or if not implemented, have an impact on adjacent park areas or systems?
4. **Condition:** Is it in immediate need of improvement; in need of improvement in the near future; or in good condition relative to other park areas? How badly deteriorated is the project area according to the following check list?
 - a. Facilities - condition, user services, historic perspective.
 - b. Circulation - paving, circulation system, access.
 - c. Structures and furnishings - condition, historic perspective.
 - d. Vegetation - plant health, plant diversity, soil conditions, invasive growth.
 - e. Water - health, historic perspective, environmental considerations.
 - f. Infrastructure - water, sewer, drainage, electrical.
5. **Maintenance and Management:** What is the level of maintenance and management needed to support the implementation of this project? Is it sustainable in the immediate, near or long-term future?
6. **Funding:** Are the funds available and/or committed for this project? What is the level of needed funding (low, medium, high); the potential sources; and the projected time frame (immediate, near, long-term future)?
7. **Interagency Coordination:** Does the project require interagency coordination, and what are the difficulties of such coordination?



THE COST OF REFURBISHING THE COMMON

The following budget presents opportunities and estimated costs for all capital projects and maintenance programs delineated in this plan. Both sections are listed in approximate order of priority today.

Estimated Costs of Annual Maintenance Programs

The Annual Maintenance Program expenditures underscore the City of Boston's ongoing responsibility and long term commitment to maintenance and management of the Common. It is important to understand two levels of maintenance. The current standard level and the upgraded "ideal" level. Upgraded daily and cyclical care can mitigate the need for capital outlays. Examples include regular cleaning of the catch basins to avoid replacing drainage system components, and repairing building roofs early to avoid replacing them later.

• Incremental Cost of Increased Maintenance

Tree Program (based on commercial contractor's cost estimates)

Pruning	\$75,000
Removal and Emergency	15,000
Spraying	25,000
Injection	21,000
Fertilizer	40,000
Cabling (yearly for 3 years) (with \$1,000 yearly thereafter)	4,000
Aeration	<u>11,500</u>
Yearly Total for Tree Program	\$191,500
Yearly Total for Turf Program	50,000
Yearly Total for Additional Maintenance Crew	100,000

Estimated Costs of Capital Improvements

• Necessary Repairs and Improvements

Pathways and Furnishings	
Beacon Street Mall	\$425,000
Liberty Mall	210,000
Park Street Mall	110,000
Oliver Wendell Holmes Mall	275,000
Other Pathways	240,000
Drainage and Water Supply	<u>240,000</u>
Total for Necessary Repairs and Improvements	\$1,500,000

• Capital Needs - High Priority Projects

Parkman Bandstand	\$690,000
Frog Pond	740,000
Lafayette Mall	
Boylston Street Station	315,000
Boylston to Parkman Plaza	760,000
Parkman Plaza	315,000
Parkman Plaza to Park	380,000
Park Street Station	180,000
Parade Ground	180,000
Garage Kiosks Reconstruction	945,000
Central Burying Ground	
Mound Tombs	365,000
Stone Conservation and Landscaping	<u>80,000</u>
Total for High Priority Projects	\$4,950,000

•Capital Needs - Medium Priority Projects

Pathways in General (Includes furnishings and visitor amenities)	\$1,210,000
Monuments, Memorials & Plaques	110,000
Improve Structures	260,000
Perimeter Fencing at Charles Street	610,000
Remove Structures	<u>160,000</u>
Total for Medium Priority Projects	\$2,350,000

Total for All Capital Improvements	\$8,800,000
Contingency (20%)	<u>1,700,000</u>
GRAND TOTAL	\$10,500,000

•Unit Cost Items (includes design, fabrication,
installation and contingency)

Trees (4" caliper deciduous shade tree, planted)	\$900
Benches (concrete supports, wood seat and back, granite base)	1,800
Trash Receptacles (metal mesh)	400
Drinking Fountains (handicap accessible)	2,500
Sign (18x24" etched aluminum)	1,400
Replacement Perimeter Fencing (linear foot)	400

PRIORITIES

The plan establishes broad priorities which will be implemented as annual funding is increased and capital dollars are identified. Specific projects are expected to change but will reflect established priorities criteria as set forth above in chart form. The availability of funds for a specific purpose may affect order somewhat. Each time public funds become available, a public review process will be established.

RESOURCES OPERATING BUDGET

Annual Operating Budget: The City of Boston budget provides operation funds for the annual day to day maintenance and management of the Common, which represents 50 of 2,200 acres and one of 192 parks and playgrounds under its jurisdiction. For FY 1989-90, the total operating budget for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, for all its properties and facilities, was allocated as follows:

Budget Item, Parks and Recreation Department

	<u>Budget (FY 89-90)</u>	<u>%</u>
Grounds Maintenance/ Horticulture	\$7,710,748	62
Park Programming	1,843,869	15
Administration	1,131,203	9
Planning and Engineering	1,055,455	8
Regional Administration	<u>758,725</u>	<u>6</u>
TOTAL (for 192 facilities)	\$12,500,000	100

Key staff and budget line items for current and continued effective operation of the Common by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department are:

- Emerald Necklace Administrator (full time)
- Boston Common Administrator (on site, full time)
- Emerald Necklace Superintendent (Maintenance, full time)
- Common Maintenance Crew (12 staff members for 7 day a week coverage)
- Park Rangers (14 stationed at the Common June to September, other times of year currently limited to special events coverage)
- Tree Warden and Crew (full time for entire park system)
- Horticultural Crew (full time for entire park system)
- Historic Cemetery Crew (full time for entire park system)
- Trades Division (full time for entire park system)
- Ball Field Crew (full time for entire park system)
- Programming Unit (full time for entire park system)
- Planning and Development Unit (full time for entire park system)

The current budget provides for minimal or base level maintenance of the Common and does not provide for improvements or recommended upgrading of regular maintenance. These budget figures reflect normal operating expenses and do not reflect costs for programs or special events such as ice skating or the holiday tree lighting program which are augmented through private and corporate donations.

CAPITAL FUNDING OF PAST PROJECTS

Capital expenditures for the future can be set in the context of recent projects. The list below comprises major capital projects for Boston Common from 1972 to 1990:

<u>Project - Date</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Rehabilitation of Play Area - 1990		
Equipment and Installation	Private	\$40,000
Site Rehabilitation	City	35,000
Installation of Hand Rails at Shaw Memorial Steps		
1990	City	15,000
Restoration of Brewer Fountain - 1990	City	66,000
Gravestone Repair - 1990	Private	12,000
Installation of Wood Hanging Signs - 1990	City	3,000
Improvements to Pathways, Phase I - 1989	City	25,000
Pruning and Trimming of Trees - 1988	City	10,000
Renovation of Ball Fields - 1988	City	230,000
Restoration of Pedestrian Lighting		
1987	State/City match	1,100,000
Installation of Trash Receptacles - 1987	City	43,000
Installation of Sign System, Phase I - 1987	City	26,000
Repair and Installation of Post and Chain Fencing		
1987	City	30,000
Painting of Buildings and Benches - 1987	City	30,000
Furnishing and Laying Sod - 1987	City	35,000
Railroad Mall Reconstruction - 1983	City	152,000
Boston Common Monument Display Lighting		
1982	City	43,000
Ball Field Fencing - 1980	City	36,000
Manufacture and Installation of Cast Fencing - 1980	City	45,000
Furnishing and Laying Sod - 1980	City	10,000
Rehabilitation of Parkman Plaza - 1980	Private	50,000
Restoration of Guild Memorial Entrance - 1979	City	23,000
Furnishing and Laying Sod - 1978	City	10,000
Removal, Pruning and Trimming Trees - 1978	City	52,000
Ball Field Renovation - 1978	City	98,000
Repair of Walkway (Lafayette Mall) - 1978	City	10,000
Frog Pond Ice Rink - 1978	City	200,000
Furnishing and Laying Sod - 1977	City	5,000
Construction Mayor's Walk, MacArthur Mall, Brewer Fountain Area, Deer Park Yard - 1975	City	1,130,000
Art Work Restoration at Brewer Fountain - 1975	City	68,000
Manufacturing Patterns and Casting Fencing - 1974	City	102,000
Restoration of Beacon St./Park St. Fence - 1974	Federal	220,000
Improvements to Parkman Plaza - 1973	Federal	90,000
Repairing and Colorcoating Tennis Courts - 1972	City	3,000

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS

Some public agencies, other than the Parks and Recreation Department, have responsibility for buildings, subsurface structures, and curbing on or below Boston Common. From time to time, these agencies are required to make capital repairs and improvements. These improvements often necessitate the disruption of the Common's surface and offer opportunities for its restoration. These activities will continue to be coordinated and controlled, through licensing and Park Commission review, to achieve the capital improvement recommendations of this plan. Specific project areas include opportunities to make improvements along Tremont Street (MBTA) and the Parade Ground over the Boston Common Garage including the rebuilding of the entrance kiosks (Massachusetts Convention Center Authority).

THE NEED FOR NEW FUNDING

Public funding for parks is allocated annually and in general the level of support is cyclical. Thus, other sources of funding need to be considered. City support must be continued to assure at least the current level of maintenance. Boston Common advocacy is crucial to this effort. Experiments in private sector and governmental cooperation must be encouraged.

Everyone wants to use the Common. Administrative management can help to reduce wear on this 48 acre site. Compared to other parks in the city's open space system, Boston Common will continue to accommodate extraordinary use. Therefore it must also receive supplemental care.

Specific projects, whether capital, maintenance or programmatic, have been supported and services have been provided from such groups and or funds as:

Boston Art Commission Adopt-A-Statue Program
(public art conservation)
Boston Department of Public Works
(pedestrian lighting)
Boston Edison Tree Fund
(care of existing trees)
Boston Landmarks Commission
(professional assistance, archaeological investigation)
Boston Office of the Arts and Humanities
(professional assistance)
Boston Police Department
(enforcement and security)
Boston Trust Office Programs
(capital improvements)
Boys and Girls Club
(management of vendors)
Friends of the Public Garden and Common
(tree planting, Shaw Memorial restoration and other special projects)
Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau
(management of Visitor Information Center)
Henderson Foundation
(gravestone repair)
Massachusetts Convention Authority
(management of underground garage)
Massachusetts Cultural Council
(gravestone repair)
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management
(pedestrian lighting grant)
Massachusetts Historical Commission
(grant to stabilize Central Burying Ground tombs)
MBTA
(surface improvements and building improvements)
Mayor's Office of Capital Planning
(capital improvement funds)
Midtown Cultural District Art Committee
(professional assistance)
National Park Service
(support for Freedom Trail)

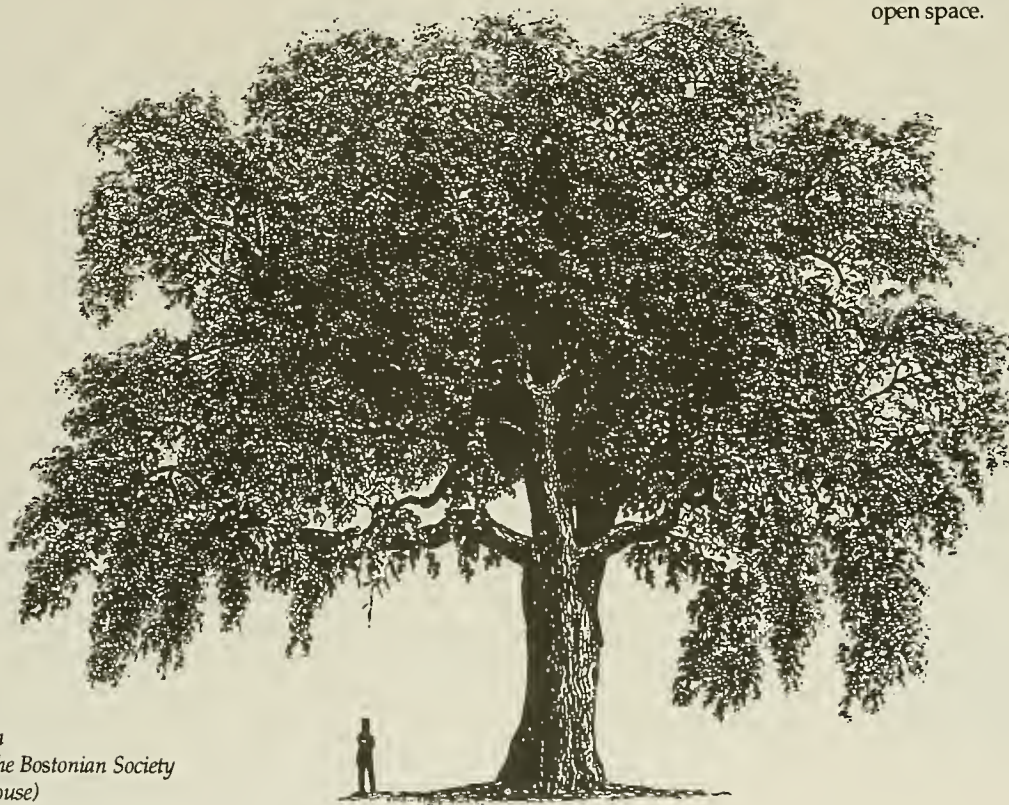
The Parks Commission invites private citizens, groups, foundations, businesses, corporations and public agencies and authorities to join the Parks and Recreation Department in protecting Boston Common.

AN INVITATION TO STEWARDSHIP

The Parks and Recreation Commission, in developing this management plan, recognizes the complexity of the challenge before it. In delineating clear operating and administrative procedures and goals for improving them, it has set forth a long term agenda. The public process which has intensively reviewed every recommendation and statement ensures that this document comprises a consensus about our direction.

It is essential, however, that the private sector aid and encourage these efforts. The private sector, principally through the Friends of the Public Garden and Boston Common, provides a monitoring and advocacy role as the Common competes for its share of public funding. The need for private funds to complement the standard maintenance and programming provided through public funding is recognized in this plan as one way to meet the need to provide above standard care.

What is not yet determined is how we will achieve these goals. This shared responsibility is part of the future as well as the legacy of Boston's most venerable and venerated open space.



*The Great Elm
(Courtesy of the Bostonian Society
- Old State House)*

APPENDIX A

Rules of the Parks and Recreation Commission relative to the Use of the Public Parks and Other Public Places (Including Boundary Roads and Parkways) Under its Control
City of Boston, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Section 1.

No person shall, in any public park (including any boundary road thereof) or other public place (including any parkway) under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission:

- a. abuse or annoy another; or
- b. beg or canvass for alms; or
- c. break any bottle or other article of glass; or
- d. drop or place and suffer to remain, except in a receptacle provided for the purpose, any bottle, can, paper or other thing; or
- e. make any public speech or distribute free or for a price any printed matter in the Public Garden or in, or within twenty-five feet of, the Frog Pond in Boston Common or in such portions of the public parks and other public places under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission as are from time to time especially set apart for the playing of games and athletic contests; or
- f. enter, or remain in, any public park between the hours of 11:30 PM and 6:00 AM on any day except for the purpose of going through such park on the walks or malls thereof unless specific request is made for a particular facility, written to the Commissioner, and brought before the Commission and approved. The Parks Commissioner can postpone or cancel events due to inclement weather or public safety.
- g. have in his or her possession any intoxicating liquor.

Section 2.

No person shall, in any public park (including any boundary road thereof), or other public place (including any parkway) under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission, except under the auspices of public authority:

- a. sit, stand or lie upon, or climb upon or over, any balustrade, railing, fence, wall, roof, statue, monument, fountain, bush or tree; or
- b. go under any balustrade, railing or fence; or
- c. stand or lie upon any seat; or
- d. go upon any flower bed or cultivated area; or
- e. dig up, cut, break, remove, deface, defile, or take any tree, bush, plant, turf, rock, gravel, building, structure, fence, railing, sign or other thing connected with such park or place; or
- f. disturb any bird's nest or eggs; or
- g. injure or have possession of any wild animal or bird; or
- h. set any trap or snare; or
- i. throw any stone or other missile; or
- j. drop or place and suffer to remain a lighted match, cigarette, cigar or other burning substance; or
- k. have or discharge any firecracker or firework; or
- l. discharge any firearm or destructive weapon; or
- m. have in any such park or place, except a boundary road or parkway on which there are dwellings, any firearm or destructive weapon; or
- n. go on foot on any drive or bridle path except to go directly across from one walk to another; or
- o. sit, stand or lie upon lawn areas in the Public Garden except such lawn areas designated as sitting areas.

Section 3.

No person shall, in any public park (including any boundary road thereof) or other public place (including any parkway) under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission, except under the auspices of public authority or in any place especially set apart for the purpose by the Parks and Recreation Commission:

- a. have or allow any animal, except a dog on a leash no longer than eight feet, or cat under proper control; or walk a dog in a designated Dog Free Zone; or
- b. have, ride, or drive any vehicle except a wheelchair, baby carriage or other like vehicle; or
- c. moor or use a boat or raft; or
- d. skate, or coast with a sled; or
- e. use a bicycle, scooter, roller skates, skateboard or the like; or
- f. play ball or any other game or sport; or
- g. run in a race; or
- h. bathe or swim; or
- i. fish; or
- j. make a fire; or
- k. have or allow any animal, including a cat or dog, with the exception of a seeing eye dog for a blind or handicapped person, on a leash, within the boundaries of the Public Garden.
- l. play golf or hit golf balls.

Section 4.

No person shall be at any outdoor swimming pool under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission, or upon any beach under its control, or in or upon the waters of any such pool or beach, unless he is so clothed that his body is not indecently exposed; and no person shall dress or undress at any such swimming pool or beach except in a place especially set apart for the purpose by the Parks and Recreation Commission; and no person over the age of twelve years shall wade or bathe in, or make any use of the waters in the Frog Pond in Boston Common.

Swimming pools are subject to Community Schools rules and regulations, even if said pools are still deeded to the Parks Department.

Section 5.

No person shall have or allow on any bridle path in any public park or other public place under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission any horse except a well broken horse, and no person shall race or gallop any horse on any such bridle path; and horses shall not be led or ridden on any such bridle path more than two abreast.

Section 6.

No person shall, in any public park (including any boundary road thereof) or other public place (including any parkway) under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission; unless under a lease or concession granted under Chapter 365 of the Acts of 1897, and unless a written permit be on their person or prominently displayed, engage in any commercial enterprise or solicit business or display or distribute any commercial advertising matter; nor shall any person, except in accordance with a written permit from the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation, have or drive in or on any such park or place (or boundary road or parkway) any vehicle having a seating capacity of more than eight passengers.

Section 7.

No person in any public park (including boundary road thereof) or other public place (including any parkway) under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission shall fail to comply with any reasonable direction given by any police officer or by any Parks and Recreation Department employee or contained in any notice posted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Section 8.

No person shall place any snow or ice removed from private property upon any sidewalk or roadway of any boundary road of a public park or of any parkway under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission; nor shall the owner or tenant of an estate abutting on any sidewalk suffer any snow to remain on such sidewalk for more than three hours between sunrise and sunset or suffer any ice to so remain unless such ice is made even and covered with sand, sawdust or ashes to prevent slipping.

Section 9.

No person shall drive any vehicle upon any sidewalk or any boundary road of a public park or of any parkway under the control of the Parks and Recreation Commission except in accordance with a written permit from the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation. In places where vehicle use is permitted, no person shall ride in excess of five miles per hour, except where specifically designated.

Section 10.

Whoever violates any provision of section seven of these rules shall be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars for each offense; and whoever violates any other provision of these rules shall be punished by a fine of not more than fifty dollars for each offense.

APPENDIX B

Complementary Documentation

An Annotated Bibliography of Recent Planning Documents for Boston Common

An Act Protecting Certain Public Commons, Chapter 362 of the Acts of 1990. Commonwealth of Massachusetts. 1990. *A shadow bill which supplements city legislation.*

A Study of the Potential for Additional Memorial Siting in the Boston Common and Public Garden. Prepared for the Boston Landmarks Commission and Boston Art Commission. By Patrick Fearon, Daniel Kowalski, Taizo Yamada; John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. May 1986. *Recommendations concerning when new pieces of art may be appropriate for the Common and Garden and where they may be located, with a proposed process to guide applicants and the city in the selection of suitable art works.*

Boston Common Pathway Plan. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By Walker • Kluesing Design Group. December 1989. *A companion document to the Boston Common Management Plan detailing existing conditions and recommendations for paving and attendant furnishings.*

The Boston Common and Public Garden Utility Report. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By Storch Associates. January 1991. *A summary report of current conditions and recommendations with cost estimates.* Accompanied by The Boston Common and Public Garden Utility Report Appendices. March 1990 (Draft). *Hydraulic analyses with drainage inventories and condition reports.*

Boston Common Tree Survey. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By Brian Gilbert. May 1, 1988. *A plan locating trees, accompanied by a summary report and tree-by-tree existing conditions analysis keyed to the plan.*

Boston Common Use Study. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By Carr Lynch Associates, Inc. January 1988. *A report with plans and photographs to illustrate patterns of pedestrian use and user activity at different times of day and on weekdays vs. weekends. General information on the entire park plus specific information concerning the Visitor Information Center's users.*

Conceptual Design of Signage for the Boston Common. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Friends of the Public Garden and Common. By Mary and Tom McLaughlin. December 20, 1986. *A plan recommending elements and locations for a comprehensive signage system, with cost estimates.*

Draft of Comments Concerning Planning Needs for Boston Common based on the Meetings of the Master Plan Committee of the Friends of the Public Garden and Boston Common. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By the Friends of the Public Garden and Boston Common. January 1988. *Informal four page memorandum.*

Master Plan for the Historic Burying Grounds, Volume One. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By William Pressley & Associates; Structural Technology, Inc.; et al. December 1986. *An analysis of existing landscape and structural conditions accompanied by prioritized recommendations and cost estimates for Central Burying Ground plus four other cemeteries.*

Midtown Cultural District Plan. Boston Redevelopment Authority and City of Boston Office of Arts and Humanities. 1989. *Downtown zoning plan for areas adjacent to two sides of the Common. Includes wind, shadow and height restrictions, and Boston Common and Public Garden Protection Area.*

Nomination Form for the Boston Common and Public Garden to the National Register of Historic Places. Available from the Boston Landmarks Commission and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Submitted June 15, 1972. *A brief history of the Common and Garden.*

The Rehabilitation of the Boston Common and Public Garden. Prepared for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. By Carol R. Johnson Associates. August 1, 1972. *A physical master plan accompanied by photographs showing existing conditions.*

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission on the Potential Designation of the Boston Common as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975. Approved April 14, 1977. *A brief history with analysis of significance and contextual planning information and with criteria to guide proposed changes to the landscape and structures.*

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Boston Common - Winter 1989 (Courtesy of Janet Steinmetz)